

リライ・シュシュのすべて

All About Lily Chou-Chou

岩井俊二

Shunji Iwai

(All About Lily Chou-Chou)

Paperback

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角川文庫

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(All About Lily Chou-Chou)

Design by MATCH&Co.

このサイトは小説です

This website is a novel.

エーテルの世界へようこそ。	Welcome to the world of Ether.
4月1日、リライファンのサイト、	April 1st, Lily's fan site,
「リライホリック」OPEN。	"Lilyholic" OPEN.
物語はここから始まる。	The story begins here.

第
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Chapter 1: Glide



I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like a melody,
just like a simple sound,
like in harmony

I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like the sky,
just fly so far away,
to another place

To be away from all,
to be one,
of everything

I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like the wind,
just flowing in the air,
through an open space

I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like the sea,
just swaying in the water,
so to be at ease

To be away from all,
to be one,
of everything

I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like a melody,
just like a simple sound,
like in harmony

《Posted by: Satie》April 1st (Sat) 00:00

☐ Carrying on Philia's will 1

First, I will write here as an homage the opening phrase from Philia's site:

"She was born on December 8th, 1980, at 10:50 PM. The exact time Mark David Chapman killed John Lennon. For me, though, that's just a coincidence. All I care about is that she was born at that exact moment. Her name: Lily Chou-Chou. Genius. Or rather, genesis. The Ether personified."

《Posted by: Satie》April 1st (Sat) 00:01

☐ Carrying on Philia's will 2

It's finally begun!

The new site for Lily Chou-Chou believers, "Lilyholic"! It's been four long months since Philia's site, "Lilyphilia," suddenly went offline.

I imagine Lily's followers were feeling frustrated. Therefore, I, Satie, despite my inadequacy, have decided to carry on Philia's will and begin a new Lily site, "Lilyholic." Philia-san! Are you well? What are you doing now?

If you'd like, please come and visit.

Ah, that's right, everyone!

Regarding this message board,

I have nothing in particular to say.

Please feel free to write whatever you like.

Even though I say that, I'm the first one writing something. In two weeks, the long-awaited new single will finally be released!

That single-cut version of "Glide."

I'm really looking forward to it!

《Posted by: Bear》April 1st (Sat) 00:29

☐ Congrats! Site Launched!

Yeah—I've been waiting for this.

Thanks, Satie-chan! How have you been?

I've been so frustrated.

Lily has been silent lately, but

finally, a single is being released, so I'm super excited!

"Glide"...Ooh, it's coming. The piano solo version on the album was amazing, but I heard a rumor that this one has a special arrangement just for the single.

I can't wait to hear it!

Lily was in this month's "bounce" magazine, wasn't she?

This year's theme is blue ether.

The first of those is 'Glide.' How interesting.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 1st (Sat) 00:50

☐ Congratulations!

Congratulations on the birth of "Lilyholic"!

Today is April Fool's Day, but this isn't a joke, right (^o^)?
I'm looking forward to "Glide" in two weeks!

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 1st (Sat) 01:01

☐ April Fool's?

What, what? What's going on? Is this an April Fool's joke?
Satie-san, please tell us!
Is it real? Is it a lie? I just can't believe it.
By the way, is it true that Lily is pregnant?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 1st (Sat) 01:02

☐ Pregnant?

Pregnant? Nevira71-san, is that true?
Also, can't this handle be simplified?

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 1st (Sat) 01:03

☐ Don't criticize other people's names > Sleepy Head

This is my real name.

Sleepy Head, long time no see, but the first thing you say is
about changing my name? You're as harsh as ever.
You should register it in your dictionary.

> Pregnant? Nevira71-san, is that really true?
April Fool's! Did you fall for it?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 1st (Sat) 01:04

☐

>You should register it in your dictionary.
Is this also an April Fool's joke?

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 1st (Sat) 01:06

☐ Sleepy Head-san

I think you're a little mistaken about how to use "April
Fool's."

《Posted by: Bear》April 1st (Sat) 01:07

☐ I agree!

I agree with Nevira71!

《Posted by: Satie》April 1st (Sat) 01:09

☐ Reunion?

It feels like a reunion.
Well, it's great that everyone's doing well.

Ah, that's right,
I wonder if [Blue Cat]-kun, [Ironman 29]-kun, and
[Pascal]-kun are doing well?
If you see this, please reply.

Oh, that's right, the "bounce" interview article has been
uploaded to the media section, so please check that out too.

《The Diva of Ether, Towards a "Blue New Century."》

What will the diva say in her single "Glide," released after a year's absence?

Three months have passed since that Shibuya Quatre live performance. The aftermath of the incident has undeniably impacted Lily over these past months. Rather than the incident itself, the media focused on Lily as an incomprehensible entity, publishing various articles. Perhaps due to her mysterious way of speaking, some media outlets criticized Lily as being like a cult leader. Whether she intentionally aimed for this series of disturbances, or whether she disregards worldly affairs, the diva of Ether is releasing her new single "Glide." Lily describes this new song as her new frontier. What is her new vision? What will the diva say?

"Ether is entering a blue dimension. This may be a significant transitional period for me as well."

Lily speaks of her state of mind in this way.

We are always bewildered by this unique "Lily-speak." To explain for unfamiliar readers, Ether is a substance that fills this world. It is a concept once believed in physics, but Lily uses it as a term closer to the spiritual world.

"The meaning of the blue ether is eternity and silence. I tried flying a white glider there. That's 'Glide.'"

"Glide" was a song with a simple piano solo arrangement that was also included in the album "Breathing" released last year. However, this time,

"...For the single cut, I was conscious of it as a completely separate song," she says.

"Last year was the 'ether of despair.' But this time, I was able to sing while feeling 'hope.'"

The word "hope" for the new century has an unusually positive image for Lily. However, the "hope" in Lily-speak has nuances that can't be simply called positive.

"Despair is the red ether. Hope is the blue ether. The color of the Earth. A teardrop floating alone in the dark universe. That's the Earth."

If you're told that, it's certainly sad. This pessimism somehow seems to resonate with young people today. Its influence is immeasurable.

Last year, unfortunate incidents occurred one after another around Lily. A fan's suicide, a staff member's assault and injury incident, and the murder incident at Shibuya Quatre. Unpleasant images drifted around her. Lily seems to have sublimated these incidents, which would normally lead directly to image damage, into a truly unique promotion using the special language of "ether." When this was mentioned, even Lily's expression clouded over for a moment. However, the words that came from her mouth were, as always, or rather, distinctly different from our morals.

"Isn't being alive a sad event for the first place? For humans, the greatest emotional wound is existence."

In this way, Lily transformed both the protest suicide incident by a fan and the murder incident at Shibuya Quatre into her own "Jewel,"

...and goes on. Her peculiarity lies not so much in her music but rather in this thought circuit.

However, for fans, those words, the magic of Ether, seem to be irresistibly pleasant.

In her new song "Glide," Lily repeats "I wanna be." I want to become sound. I want to become the sky. I want to go far away... I'm a little worried that another young person who has been influenced might go far away again.

"The speed of the image that runs through the Ether surpasses even light. Where we go depends on the mood of the Ether. There are people who worry about why they were born. There is no reason. There is song. There is no reason. There is only song. In the undulation of the Ether. That's why I can only sing. The time I'm singing is the only happiness. No, even such a thing as happiness doesn't exist. Only Ether fills this world."

This is her answer. In that string of meaningless words, perhaps the truth of the universe is hidden. Perhaps there is no meaning at all. Deciphering it is left to each and every Lily believer.

One magazine described Lily Chou-Chou as more dangerous than an average cult. It is because her songs and words contain only chaos and despair, they say. Just where in the world is the glider flying through the blue Ether trying to take her fans?

(Kousei Honda)

☪†

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 1st (Sat) 23:37

☐ It's Ironman!

Sorry for being late, everyone.

Anyway, congratulations.

Lily in "bounce"!

I wasn't too keen on the interviewer being Kousei Honda.

As expected, it was a terrible article.

Well, it's better than a weekly magazine article, though.

By the way, does anyone have information about radio appearances or anything?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 1st (Sat) 23:39

☐ Lily in "bounce"!

Long time no see, Ironman 29-san!

Kousei Honda is the worst!

Don't you think he takes a negative view of Lily?

She definitely doesn't say things with that intention.

It's difficult to shake off an image once it's attached.

But Lily, who has no intention of shaking it off at all, is the best!

By the way, Lily, are you looking at this page?

If you're looking, please leave a message!

《Posted by: Amika》April 1st (Sat) 23:48

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you.

I'm really touched to find that there's a site like this.

I'll be popping in from time to time.

I'm not sure how much I understand about the Ether that Lily talks about, but there was a time when I felt something like it.

In middle school, as graduation was approaching, I was looking at the sky alone on the roof. Then, for some reason, I suddenly became sad and unintentionally cried.

I don't know the reason. It wasn't because I was graduating. But suddenly, my body that had changed, the fact that I still didn't know about love, the fact that I would eventually have to say goodbye to that version of myself, and so on... as I was thinking about these things, I couldn't stop crying.

That day, I went home and listened to "Jewel" all night long. And I thought that if something like Ether existed, it would explain why I was crying.

I (live in the countryside) like the wide, earthy fields, and I also like Shibuya, where I go on weekends, but instead of those visible towns and scenery, I felt that there was an invisible, different space-time, and that I was walking diagonally through it.

If humans could walk straight vertically, they might be able to live forever. But because we walk diagonally, on June 14, 1982 (my birthday), I suddenly came into this world.

I appeared in this world, and I felt like someday I would disappear from it.

I think that fragility, or perhaps precariousness, was the real reason I cried. And I believe that separate space-time is what Lily calls Ether.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 1st (Sat) 23:52

☐ Welcome!

Welcome, Amika-san! Nice to meet you. Thanks for the wonderful story. Please feel free to post more!

《Posted by: Satie》April 1st (Sat) 23:53

☐ Welcome, Amika-san.

Welcome, Amika-san.

Nice to meet you.

According to my personal interpretation, that is precisely what Ether is, I think.

In Amika-san's sensitivity, I feel the true Ether.

By the way, what's your favorite song?

《Posted by: Amika》April 1st (Sat) 23:56

☐ Favorite song

For me, it's definitely "Tree of Silence."

When I heard it for the first time, I thought, "Could it be... this song was born for me?"

I kind of wondered that. Though, of course, it couldn't be true.

But in the end, I just really love Lily Chou-Chou's voice.

Ç†

《Posted by: TomTom》April 2nd (Sun) 23:10

☐ Congratulations

I happened to stumble in here.

I'm just a lowly Lily fan.

The single cut of "Glide" is truly something to celebrate. Out of all the songs on "Breathing," "Glide" is definitely the best!

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 3rd (Mon) 00:12

☐ What is Ether?

"A substance that Huygens initially postulated as a medium that propagates light, and later was generally considered the medium of electromagnetic fields.

It was defined by the theory of relativity."

In the past, people believed that the world was filled with a substance called Ether.

"Breath" means the moment when the material world and the spiritual world merge. Perhaps it's the feeling of warmth and tenderness that Lily transmits.

For us, it's the true form of the energy given to us by Lily. We call this Ether. I am also one who was guided to this site by Ether. Dream Child is an existence that lives by eating the dreams of Ether. When I feel suffocated and disgusted with the world, I can only sigh. I start to wonder what I am living for.

Lily turns Ether into song.

That is Lily's talent!

My pain is healed by Ether.

It is purified by Ether.

I want to exchange words only with those who understand this feeling.

That's why I knocked on this door.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 3rd (Mon) 00:16

☐ About Ether

Dream Child-san, nice to meet you.

Ether is Ether.

I think any further explanation is pointless.

Lily sings.

She gives form to Ether.

That's Lily's world.

We only need to feel it.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 3rd (Mon) 00:18

☐ To the new people

New people!

Nice to meet you all.

Let's all liven up Lily and this site together!

Write whatever you like.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 3rd (Mon) 00:22

☐ Please don't misunderstand > Dream Child-san

Please don't misunderstand.

I didn't mean to deny what you said, Dream Child-san. But please also understand that I don't want to hear other people's definitions. I just want to absorb Lily's Ether without any noise. That's why I don't want it defined. I'm afraid that if I understand it as "that's what it is," then it will all be over.

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 3rd (Mon) 00:25

☐ Re. What is Ether? 2

Ether is not words.

No one can speak of Ether.

Even Lily cannot.
 Ether is reality.
 Ether is a dream.
 Ether is time.
 Ether is space.

Definitions are unnecessary. It cannot be spoken of in words.

《Posted by: Matsumoto Hitoshi》April 3rd (Mon) 00:26

☐ You ARE talking about it!

You're talking about it, aren't you?
 If you can't talk about it, then don't!

Ç†

《Posted by: Satie》April 3rd (Mon) 23:37

☐ The image of flying

I think the image of "flying" is essential when talking about Lily.

This image is hidden in all of her songs, not just "Wound That Heals," but even in songs where neither sky nor wings appear. This time, it's the song that best depicts that.

Humans don't have wings, but they can always fly. As long as there is Ether, they can fly.
 She makes us realize that.

《Posted by: Amika》April 3rd (Mon) 23:41

☐ Re. Satie's thoughts

I'm sure we can fly.
 I want to fly, too.
 Toward the blue sky.
 We can definitely fly, right? If we're in the Ether.

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 3rd (Mon) 23:53

☐ Glide

When things are tough or sad,
 people look up at the big sky.

The blue sky.
 It's amazing such a beautiful color exists in the world! I found a small white glider in it. How high can people fly? At times like that, the courage that comes out is real courage. Courage to live. Courage not to give in to pain. Lily gave us that courage.

《Posted by: Frog》April 4th (Tue) 00:05

☐ Humans can't fly

Humans can't fly. They're ants crawling on the ground. The sky and the universe...
 It's only with a lot of money that planes and rockets fly around in the sky...

Humans feel like they can fly a little just because of that.

If so, then ants can fly too.

If you pinch them at their tips, they can fly for a few meters.

Let's try it. The great ant adventure.

But that's not what you'd call flying.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 4th (Tue) 00:07

☐ Re. Humans can't fly

Whether you can fly or not, I think it depends on each person's imagination.

People who don't think they can fly will never fly.

It's your choice if you, Frog-san, can't fly, but

it's wrong to define all humans by that.

《Posted by: Frog》April 4th (Tue) 00:23

☐ Humans can't fly 2

Humans can't fly. They're ants crawling on the ground.

Termites, black ants, yellow ants.

In a mixture of nitrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and methane.

Humans foolishly dream.

They worry about why they were born.

Each person worries alone.

They worry about "why I?" not "why us?"

Everyone lives for their own needs. Selfish ants.

Hurting and being hurt. Wounds of the heart.

Don't be stupid.

The heart can't be wounded. Has anyone ever seen a heart?

We are each given one body, and it simply lives each day.

If each person had a special meaning,

that would be really creepy, right?

It's creepy if ants have more meaning than just being ants.

Are humans the only ones with a special mission?

Words are typed into the chat.

Everyone writes about their own worries and pain.

Each person is aware of themselves, and they say they can't see the future, or their own vagueness, or they feel lost, or

they don't feel real, or they don't feel alive. Everyone is just

so concerned about themselves, so precious and dear to

themselves. While pretending to care about others, they're

ultimately just talking about themselves.

That kind of feeling is really gross.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 4th (Tue) 00:26

☐ Re. Humans can't fly 2

You're the one who's gross.

Have you ever even listened to any of Lily's songs?

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 5th (Wed) 01:28

☐ That's funny

Frog-kun, acting like a philosopher. That's funny. But isn't there one important thing you're forgetting? How do you explain ski jumpers? They're flying.

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 5th (Wed) 01:33

☐ Ants

There are ants crawling on the ground.
They're so focused on the ground, they don't even know what the weather is like today. Their bodies are shiny black, and their eyes are a collection of countless tiny eyes.
Poor ants covered in black armor.

But, look.

On their shiny backs, in each of those countless eyes, you can definitely see the blue sky reflected.
It's just that the ants don't notice it.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 5th (Wed) 01:39

☐ He's a frog, Dream Child-san

A frog is perfect. Perfect for this person.

Frog version...

There's a frog crawling on the ground.
It's so focused on the ground, it doesn't even know today's weather.

Its body shines a greenish color,
and its eyes are vaguely chasing flies.
A poor frog covered in dripping slime.
But, look.

On its shiny back, in each of its cloudy eyes, you can definitely see the blue sky reflected.
It's just that the frog doesn't notice it.

《Posted by: Frog》April 5th (Wed) 01:45

☐ Whether ant or frog

Ants can only fly when they grow wings.
Frogs fly with their legs.
Humans don't have wings. They don't have legs for flying either. That's why they can't fly.
That's all.

Go ahead and dream of flying if you want.
Go ahead and listen to Lily while wearing your Walkman.
But from the outside,
you just look like you're standing there blankly.

The sky doesn't belong to you.
The sky just exists as the sky.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 5th (Wed) 01:48

☐ I mean...

I mean, you can fly even without wings, right? What about ski jumping? The Japanese ski jumping team flew wonderfully and got a gold medal, you know.

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 5th (Wed) 01:55

☐ Ants again

There are ants crawling on the ground.
People call them pitiful ants.
The ants don't know Lily's songs.
That's why they can't become human.

Even if these ants grow wings,
they'll just flutter around sniffing the queen ant's pheromones.
When they realize the existence of Ether,
they'll probably choke on their own foolishness.
Sleepy Head-san, please do a frog version.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 5th (Wed) 01:58

☐ Frogs again

There are frogs crawling in the mud.

People call it a grieving frog.
The frog doesn't know Lily's songs.
That's why the frog can't become human.

Even if this frog had the power to fly,
it would just sniff around for fly pheromones,
and lick its sloppy tongue.
Without realizing the existence of Ether,
the frog becomes numb and falls asleep.
A pitiful frog sleeping on a dissection table.

《Posted by: Luka》April 5th (Wed) 02:03

☐ I'm hurt

Nice to meet you. I'm Luka, a freelance worker. I'm hurt by what Frog-san said. Why do you write words that hurt people? Right now, I'm listening to Lily to heal my wounds.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:06

☐ Nice to meet you > Frog-san

Nice to meet you, Frog-san. Your thinking is flawed. Ironman 29-kun already proved it. Also, the logic that flying in a plane doesn't count as flying is inconsistent. Do you think planes are suspended by strings or something?

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:07

☐ Additional > Frog-san

I feel like your opinions aren't appropriate for this site. It would be best for you if you didn't post anymore.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:08

☐ I forgot to mention > Frog-san

Frog-san.

I forgot to mention, but I'm starting to feel like I really don't like you. Please leave. Don't make me any angrier.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:09

☐ One more thing to add > Frog-san

Frog-san.

One more thing to add, I sincerely wish you would disappear. To put it more simply, just die (^ - ^;).

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:10

☐ To be honest > Frog-san

Frog-san.

To be honest, just die! You jerk!

《Posted by: TomTom》April 5th (Wed) 02:12

☐ Haha!

Nevira71-san, don't get so worked up. I'm sure he's already gone.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:13

☐ What's with the laughing? > TomTom

What do you mean by "Haha!"?

Were you laughing at me?

《Posted by: TomTom》April 5th (Wed) 02:15

☐ I'm sorry

No. Nevira71-san, I meant to laugh at the frog. Don't worry. You're pretty strict about checking things, aren't you?

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:16

☐ For beginners > TomTom

TomTom-kun, I think you should avoid saying things that could be misunderstood. I guess it can't be helped since you're a beginner, though.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 5th (Wed) 02:17

☐ Advice > TomTom

TomTom-kun, if you don't want to cause misunderstandings, you should write something like this: "Haha! > Frog"

《Posted by: TomTom》April 5th (Wed) 02:19

☐ Beginner?

Beginner? What am I a beginner at? If you're talking about Lily, I won't let that slide. Take it back. At least I even pre-ordered "Jewel." More importantly, why do you all call me "-kun"? How do you know I'm younger than you?

P.S.

I admit I'm a beginner when it comes to the internet. I finally understand the meaning of ">". I thought the person who wrote it was the one who posted it, so I was confused. The poster's name is different. Thanks, Ironman 29-san.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:21

☐ That's why beginners are a pain > TomTom

Seriously. This is why beginners are such a pain. You don't even realize you're a Lily beginner. So what if you pre-ordered "Jewel"? Seriously. If you want to brag about how long you've been a fan over something like that, you should join The Alfee's fan club or something. Lily's fan level is measured by the density of Ether. Your Ether density is too low. You might think you've been listening to Lily for a long time, but you're a total beginner.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:23

☐ You said it yourself, didn't you? > TomTom

Come on, look at your first post. You wrote that you were just a lowly Lily fan. You declared it yourself. Don't blame me.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:25

☐ Don't blame others > TomTom

You called yourself "lowly," and then you get mad when I call you a beginner.

Seriously, you're so immature. It's disappointing.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:28

☐ I should probably mention > TomTom

Tom Yum Kung, oh sorry, TomTom-kun. Whether you're a beginner or a newcomer doesn't matter to us. You're an outsider. I wish you'd just lurk without posting.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 5th (Wed) 02:30

☐ While I'm at it > TomTom

Tom Yum Kung is fine. Tom Yum. I'll call you that next time you show up!

Let's cheers!

Ç†

《Posted by: Frog》April 7th (Fri) 00:13

☐ Dream Child's dream

Dream Child's dream is Fukai.
Sleepy Head's is even more Fukai.
They say anyone who doesn't know Lily's songs
isn't human.

Dream Child's dream is Fukai.
Sleepy Head's is even more Fukai.
What is Lily?

Is it great just to sing songs?
I'll speak badly about Lily.
If that means I'm not a Lily fan, then so be it.
Actually, I don't consider myself a Lily fan.
I don't plan to talk about Lily.
Is there anything more meaningless than that?
Lily has no meaning.
It's just a song.

《Posted by: Bear》April 7th (Fri) 00:16

☐ Huh?

He's still here, that jerk!

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 7th (Fri) 00:18

☐ Liar? > TomTom

TomTom-kun, you lied.
I foolishly believed you when you said you were leaving.
> Nevira71-san, don't get so worked up. He's probably gone
now.
Do you remember saying this?
Why don't you realize that your carelessness is what's making
Nevira71-san angry?

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 7th (Fri) 00:20

☐ Can't be helped, right? > Ironman 29

Can't it be helped?
TomTom is a beginner.
His Ether is weak.
Satie-kun, can you delete Frog's posts?

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 7th (Fri) 00:27

☐ You don't understand > Frog

Frog-kun, it seems you still don't understand.
Your words hurt people.
Did you see Luka-san's post? She's deeply hurt because of
you. If you intend to hurt people any more than this,

we are prepared to do something about it.

《Posted by: Satie》April 7th (Fri) 00:40

☐ To Frog-kun

Frog-kun,

If you have something unpleasant to say, please do it somewhere else. I don't think this is the right place for that.

《Posted by: Bear》April 7th (Fri) 00:41

☐ Is it almost my turn?

I wonder if he'll understand unless we make him feel a little pain? This guy.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 7th (Fri) 00:45

☐ My question

Frog-san, you've forgotten one important thing, haven't you (^-^)?

You haven't answered my question at all. And yet you call me "Fukai"? Am I Fukai?

Thank you for the compliment. I'm very happy.

Do you know why? I'm sure you don't. You said "Fukai" in katakana. Thank you very much. I'll take that to mean "deep." That's the best compliment. The schemer has fallen into his own trap. Using katakana was your downfall, wasn't it? Why don't you stop pretending and use kanji?

[Translator Note: Fukai(不快) means unpleasant/messed up. Fukai(深い) means deep and profound, both words are written the same in katakana, but have completely different meaning kanji.]

Now, Frog-san. First, answer my question.
Have you ever listened to any of Lily's songs?

《Posted by: Frog...also known as Lily》April 7th (Fri) 00:53

☐ Re. My question

"Frog" is not my name.

It's your name.

You are pitiful frogs on a dissection table.

Your Ether is just regular Ether.

Just a placebo.

You sniff Ether,

and foolishly misunderstand that it's something wonderful.

An Ether cult.

Do you want me to cut open my stomach and show you what's inside?

Cult frogs won't be saved.

I am the only one who knows true Ether.

Because I am myself.

Blind believers, you pick a fight with the real me.

Stop with the extra nonsense,

and just listen to my songs.

Without spreading useless rumors.

Devote your hearts only to true Ether.

《Posted by: Bear》April 7th (Fri) 00:54

☐ To Frog-san

So, are you saying you're actually Lily Chou-Chou herself?

《Posted by: Amika》April 7th (Fri) 00:58

☐ No way!

Are you kidding?

That would be amazing, though.

When I reread Frog-san's posts with that in mind, I do feel like there's something really deep there.

《Posted by: Satie》April 7th (Fri) 00:59

☐ From the Administrator

If Frog-kun is actually Lily, that's incredible. If possible, I'd like some proof.

《Posted by: Lily》April 9th (Sun) 01:12

☐ Everyone!

Everyone, Frog's Lily is a fake.

I, the real Lily, have been silently listening to what you've all been saying.

《Posted by: Satie》April 9th (Sun) 01:12

☐ No way

Lily-san?

No way... Which one is real?

《Posted by: Bear》April 9th (Sun) 01:13

☐ The real voice!

No doubt!

We've finally received words from Lily herself! This is a historic event!

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 9th (Sun) 01:14

☐ Really?

Really, really Lily?

Then who was Frog?

If this is really true, it's amazing, but Lily-san, could you give us some kind of sign to prove it's really you?

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 9th (Sun) 01:18

☐ Lily descends

Lily has descended.

No proof is needed.

Those who feel it already know.

Who is fake, and who is real.

《Posted by: Bear》April 16th (Sun) 00:03

☐ It's me, Bear

I was waiting for Frog-kun's reaction, and it seems a week has passed.

In the end, I guess he was a fake.

By the way, I'll confess. I actually wrote the comment from "Lily."

Sorry for tricking you.

But it's okay now since we know Frog was a fake.

《Posted by: Matsumoto Hitoshi》April 16th (Sun) 00:05

☐ To Dream Child

Hey, Dream Child!

Where did Lily descend to?

Is Bear really the real one?

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:19

☐ From the Administrator

I said you could write anything here, but since the Frog incident, things have taken a strange turn.

Based on this reflection, from now on, Frog-kun will be banned from this site.

If I find any of his posts, I will delete them immediately.

Also, Matsumoto Hitoshi-kun, if you continue to slander others, you will also be banned.

《Posted by: Matsumoto Hitoshi》April 16th (Sun) 00:21

☐ Hey, Satie

Hey Satie.

Is this slander?

I'm saying it's a joke!

Read properly!

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:30

☐ Goodbye

Goodbye Matsumoto Hitoshi-kun.

We don't need slander or jokes here.

I find you more unpleasant than Frog. From now on, all of his posts will be deleted.

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:34

☐ To Matsumoto-kun

Matsumoto-kun, please stop. No matter how many times you post, I will delete them.

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:38
☐ From the Administrator

You're persistent, Matsumoto-kun.

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:41
☐ From the Administrator

To everyone, from the Administrator.
Based on the Ether Law, the following two "troublemakers"
will be banned from the site:
Frog (for insulting Lily and impersonating a user)
Matsumoto Hitoshi (for petty offenses and obstructing
official business)

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:43
☐ From the Administrator

Matsumoto Hitoshi, I'm telling you, you're
persistent!
I'll send you a mail bomb!

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 16th (Sun) 00:49
☐ Suggestion > Satie

Aren't you going to ban Tom Yum too?

《Posted by: Satie》April 16th (Sun) 00:52

☐ Oh, speaking of which,

TomTom-kun has completely lost his motivation, hasn't he?

Oh, speaking of which, I wonder if Pascal-kun and Blue
Cat-kun are doing well?
They haven't shown themselves at all.

[Translator's note: (ROM) Abbreviation for Read Only
Memory. It refers to people who only read BBS or chat posts
online without writing anything themselves.]

このサイトは小説です。 This site is a novel.

事件は既に起きている。 The incident has already occurred.

第
二
章
飽
和

Chapter 2: Saturation



I miss you, I miss you
1 億光年の果てにもとどいて

I miss you, I miss you
40 万キロも先の月が笑う

I miss you, I miss you
南回帰線で戻ってきたなら

I miss you, I miss you
あなたのくちびるに近づいてしまった
あと 1 mm にある飽和への入り口

I miss you, I miss you
Even at the end of a hundred million light years

I miss you, I miss you
The moon, four hundred thousand kilometers ahead, smiles

I miss you, I miss you
If you come back at the the line of the Southern Tropic

I miss you, I miss you
I've gotten close to your lips
The entrance to saturation is within 1mm

《Posted by: TomTom》April 18th (Tue) 13:05

☐ Glide

I listened to it.

"Glide"!

I was revived by the fresh Ether!

Ah, I'm completely a Lilyholic.

Lily is everything to me, like, she's my reality.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 18th (Tue) 17:25

☐ You're rude > TomTom

Did you want to be the first to give your opinion more than anyone else?

I'm incredibly annoyed that someone like Tom Yum beat me to it.

Today's Ether is in a bad mood.

By the way, why did he laugh at me back then?

《Posted by: Amika》April 18th (Tue) 20:06

☐ The best!

"Glide" was the best!

Words are unnecessary!

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 18th (Tue) 20:08

☐ The meaning of hope

I finally understand the meaning of the hope Lily was talking about.

I was truly able to honestly feel hope.

I felt like gathering all the shallow message songs flooding the world and burning them.

《Posted by: TomTom》April 18th (Tue) 20:10

☐ > To the Administrator

It seems there's a ranking system on this BBS.

Could you create a list or something, since it's hard to understand for newcomers?

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 18th (Tue) 20:11

☐ About that kind of comment... > TomTom

TomTom-kun, shouldn't you email the administrator directly about that kind of comment?

《Posted by: TomTom》April 18th (Tue) 20:12

☐ > To Ironman 29

I'm sorry. But in that case, could you also complain to Nevira71-san? I feel like I'm being personally attacked and it's tough.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 18th (Tue) 20:13

☐ Personal attack? > TomTom

That's unexpected. Besides, who was the first one to laugh?

《Posted by: Satie》April 18th (Tue) 20:14

☐ From the Administrator

Recently, there are people writing about personal problems unrelated to the community here.

Please refrain from doing so. Thank you.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 18th (Tue) 20:16

☐ Refrain from doing so > TomTom

I'm talking about you, Tom Yum.

《Posted by: TomTom》April 18th (Tue) 20:17

☐ To the Administrator, I'm sorry

I'm reflecting on my actions, very much so.

I'm prepared not to retaliate no matter what anyone says.

By the way, everyone, please tell me more about your impressions of Glide.

Please heal my heart with your words.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 18th (Tue) 20:20

☐ Needless to say

Needless to say, this is that kind of place, isn't it? I'm troubled because there are too many residents lacking Ether lately.

Ç†

《Posted by: Amika》April 19th (Wed) 20:00

☐ To TomTom-san

Lily's Ether has a special power, and I feel like it directly delivers something to us.

It's accompanied by a kind of floating sensation, and it heals our hearts.

A power that makes us realize that even if we're insignificant, we still have a reason to live.

For me, she's a "healing radio station."

《Posted by: TomTom》April 19th (Wed) 20:04

☐ "Healing radio station"

That expression, "healing radio station," is great.

By the way, I think being healed is a kind of brainwashing effect, like beta-endorphins or something.

I think you can get that kind of thing from drugs too, but I wonder where Lily's "drug effect" comes from.

I'm sure it's in her voice.

I like Jane Birkin, and her voice is incredibly healing to me.

As for that kind of vocalist, I also liked Ryouko Sano.

Her voice was healing too.

I think Lily's voice has some kind of "drug-like" effect too.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 19th (Wed) 20:07

☐ Jane Birkin

I like Jane Birkin too.
But who is Ryoko Sano?

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 19th (Wed) 20:11

☐ About healing

You are healed when you are healing others.
It's no good to just seek it.
You have to give it.

《Posted by: Bear》April 19th (Wed) 20:12

☐ Dream Child's verse

Oh, it's been a while since we've seen Dream Child's verse!
Welcome back.
But are you involved in some kind of religion?

《Posted by: Dream Child》April 19th (Wed) 20:15

☐ Prejudice

Prejudice makes people despair.
Prejudice hurts people.

《Posted by: Bear》April 19th (Wed) 20:18

☐ It was a slip of the tongue > Dream Child-san

It was a slip of the tongue.
I apologize if it offended you.

Ç†

《Posted by: Fury》April 25th (Tue) 20:17

☐ I'm chilled to the bone.

I listened to "Glide" and I'm chilled to the bone.
It's a devil's curse.
Lily Chou-Chou, please just hurry up and die.

《Posted by: Angelica》April 25th (Tue) 20:23

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. My name is Angelica.
I'm a huge fan of Lily Chou-Chou.
My favorite song is "Wound That Heals."
If you're talking about being healed, there's no other song
that can compare.

But I think there's more to Lily Chou-Chou than that.
Don't you think her songs are more hurtful than healing?

P.S. To Fury-san, you're the one who should die.

《Posted by: Satie》April 25th (Tue) 20:25

☐ Re. Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you, Angelica-san.

I'm Satie, the administrator.

Your last P.S. was great.

The debate about whether it's healing or pain has actually been going on for about half a year. At first, of course, it was music for "pain."

Everyone was in "erotic" mode back then.

Through our own discussions, we've come to believe that "pain" is actually "healing," and that "healing" and "hurting" are synonymous.

The person who proposed this was Philia-san, who used to run Lily's website. That's why, nowadays, it's common for us to consider Lily as healing.

《Posted by: Angelica》April 25th (Tue) 20:28

☐ I'm sorry

I didn't know that. I'm very sorry.

I said something presumptuous without knowing anything.

《Posted by: Bear》April 25th (Tue) 20:29

☐ Hey, hey!

Hey, hey, Satie-kun!

You shouldn't say such intimidating things to newcomers!

《Posted by: Satie》April 25th (Tue) 20:31

☐ Sorry!

Sorry!

《Posted by: Luka》April 25th (Tue) 20:34

☐ I'm hurt > Fury

I'm Luka. I'm hurt by what you said, Fury-san. My heart is still pounding. Human malice is the scariest thing. That's why I listen to Lily.

Fury-san, I want you to be hurt too.

《Posted by: Fury》April 25th (Tue) 20:37

☐ Hurt?

> I want you to be hurt too.

That "Luka" woman is really selfish.

If you're so afraid of being hurt, don't use the internet.

The internet is a breeding ground for malice.

Lily is the diva of malice. I can't understand how listening to this kind of music can heal anyone.

I accidentally bought it and lost a lot of money!

Give me my money back, damn it!

Are all of your brains rotten?

《Posted by: Bear》April 25th (Tue) 20:38

☐ Be gone, troll!

If you want to cause trouble, do it somewhere else!

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 25th (Tue) 20:40

☐ It's understandable > Fury

It's just that you're not qualified to listen to Lily. Lily's Ether is actually a deadly poison to people without sensitivity. This has been proven by last year's suicide incident. Ether can sometimes drive people crazy and even kill them. I sense those terminal symptoms in you. It's very dangerous. I recommend that you stop listening to Lily immediately and get yourself dirty in the filth of the secular world. Lily isn't so soft that she'd accept even low-level people.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 25th (Tue) 20:43

☐ I mean...

I mean, this guy is going to die soon, for sure.

Ç†

《Posted by: Noppo》April 26th (Wed) 19:50

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. Does anyone have a Lily poster from the Philia era?

If possible, please let me have it.

《Posted by: Bear》April 26th (Wed) 19:52

☐ Philia-san and Philia

I've been thinking, isn't it confusing to have both Philia-san and Philia? I propose we call Philia-san "F-san" from now on! F-san, please reply if you see this.

《Posted by: Angelica》April 26th (Wed) 19:58

☐ Sorry to bother you again

Sorry to bother you again. I don't know much about the Philia era. Could you tell me a little about it?

《Posted by: Satie》April 26th (Wed) 20:00

☐ Philia

Philia was the name of the group she used to be in. It had four members: Kayama Katsuhiko, Noda Shu, Kinoshita Arinori, and Lily.

Just to be clear, Philia-san is the username of someone who used to run Lily's personal website.

We used to be members of that community.

However, that site disappeared at some point, so I started this "Lilyholic" site.

What do you think about calling Philia-san "F-san"?

You can tell who we're talking about because of the "-san" ending.

《Posted by: Angelica》April 26th (Wed) 20:02
☐ Sorry to bother you again

Sorry to bother you again.
 Is Philia's album available?

《Posted by: Satie》April 26th (Wed) 20:04
☐ Fetish

There's an album called "Fetish."
 However, if you don't like Kayama Katsuhiro, you might not
 be into it. For those who got into Lily first, it's a truly
 disappointing album. You could even call it a curiosa.
 You can't feel the Ether.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 26th (Wed) 20:13
☐ Breaking news!

Breaking news!
 "Frog" has appeared on Lily's official website!

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 26th (Wed) 20:27
☐ Re. Breaking news!

I saw it.
 That's the worst!

Saying the same thing!
 I've posted a comment saying, "This guy is a net troll."
 He'll be kicked out soon.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 26th (Wed) 20:28
☐ Frog Countermeasures Committee

Let's just define him as a virus.
 Delete on sight.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 26th (Wed) 20:29
☐ Re. Frog Countermeasures Committee

Extermination, right?

《Posted by: Bear》April 26th (Wed) 20:29
☐ Re. Frog Countermeasures Committee

Execution! (^o^)

《Posted by: Satie》April 26th (Wed) 20:31
☐ The Frog Problem

It's Frog-san.
 To spread trouble even to the official site... what a pain.
 Anyway, there's no trace of him here since then, so let's leave
 it alone.

Let's do that.

Rather than talking about this, let's all forget about it, since we don't know when he might appear again.

《Posted by: Freud》April 26th (Wed) 21:33

☐ Nice to meet you

It's a pleasure to meet you all.

We'll be playing a show at Meguro Pythagoras.

We'll be playing some of Lily's songs too.

To all of you who are stressed because you can't hear Lily's voice, please come and heal your hearts with Flint & Freud's performance.

Flint & Freud Concert

"Nights We Can't Get Enough Healing"

Location: Meguro Pythagoras

Date and Time: April 29th, from 7:30 PM

Fee: 2000 yen (with a drink)

《Posted by: Satie》April 26th (Wed) 21:35

☐ Freud-san

Nice to meet you, Freud-san.

I know this is sudden, but could you please refrain from advertising here?

《Posted by: Freud》April 26th (Wed) 21:36

☐ I'm sorry!

Ah! I'm sorry!

I'm sorry I've done something stupid.

Should I delete it?

《Posted by: Satie》April 26th (Wed) 21:37

☐ Freud-san

I see that you're remorseful, so I'll leave it as is.

If anyone has some free time,

please go and see them at Meguro Pythagoras.

《Posted by: Bear》April 26th (Wed) 21:39

☐ Re. Freud-san

Satie-chan, aren't you being too lenient?

This is a site for hardcore Lily fans, you know.

I wonder if it's okay to endorse a cover band.

Freud-san, did you get permission from the artist or their agency?

Ç†

《Posted by: TomTom》April 27th (Thu) 23:22

☐ I saw a glider

I was looking at the sky today and saw an airplane flying.
 I thought it was an airplane, but it was a glider.
 I couldn't help but remember "Glide."
 The white silhouette against the evening sky was beautiful.

《Posted by: Amika》 April 27th (Thu) 23:24
☐ Huh? A glider?

I saw it too!
 What a coincidence!
 Are you by any chance living nearby, TomTom-san?

《Posted by: TomTom》 April 27th (Thu) 23:25
☐ Huh? Nearby?

Amika-san, is there a racetrack nearby?

《Posted by: Amika》 April 27th (Thu) 23:26
☐ ...> TomTom-san

...No, there isn't.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 April 27th (Thu) 23:27
☐ To a certain two people

Please refrain from personal exchanges here.

《Posted by: TomTom》 April 27th (Thu) 23:29
☐ Not like that

No, Sleepy Head-san. It might not be like that.
 This could be a huge problem related to Ether!
 Amika-san and I saw a glider at the same time.
 This is highly likely a synchronicity due to the same Ether.
 Hasn't everyone had this kind of experience?

《Posted by: Satie》 April 27th (Thu) 23:31
☐ According to Ether theory

It's been proven by Lily's words and individual experiences
 that the repeating waves of Ether often bring about such
 strange synchronicities.
 TomTom-san and Amika-san's case is likely one of them.
 Airplanes aside, gliders are not something you see very often.

《Posted by: Amika》 April 27th (Thu) 23:32
☐ Amazing!

Tears are welling up.
 Today is my new Ether Anniversary.

《Posted by: TomTom》April 27th (Thu) 23:33

☐ Re. Amazing!

That's why Ether is so amazing.
Today is my Ether Anniversary too.

《Posted by: Bear》April 27th (Thu) 23:34

☐ My experience

I saw a UFO when I was in elementary school. On my way home from school, there was an orange object floating above a nearby mountain. It flew strangely, making odd, jerky movements.

Then, right before my eyes, it suddenly disappeared. My friends didn't believe me at all, but it was definitely a UFO. As proof, spoons were bending for about a week after that. I think this is also a kind of Ether effect.

《Posted by: Nevira71》April 27th (Thu) 23:36

☐ Wow!

That's definitely a synchronicity due to Ether. Actually, I've seen a UFO too. I saw a shining star in the evening sky. Stars twinkle, right? They get brighter and dimmer. But this object, no matter how I looked at it, wasn't twinkling. The light was steady, you could say. It was small and didn't move, but it was definitely a UFO. It was just like Nevira71.

(I don't think anyone knows what Nevira71 is, though.)

It was far away, but I saw it many times. Most recently, I saw it about a year ago. I couldn't bend any spoons, but I think that's because it was too far away. I probably wasn't granted the power because it was too far. That's a bit disappointing.

《Posted by: TomTom》April 27th (Thu) 23:38

☐ Evening Star

Does everyone know what the "Evening Star" is?
It's also known as Venus.
It's called the Morning Star or the Evening Star.
Just for those who don't know.

Ç†

《Posted by: Amika》April 29th (Sat) 22:59

☐ Flint & Freud

I went to Flint & Freud's live show.
I wondered how they would sing Lily's songs with two suspicious male twin vocals!
But... Lily herself made a surprise guest appearance!
Flint used to be a member of the same band, it seems.
That's how they know each other.

《Posted by: Bear》April 29th (Sat) 23:01
☐ Freud-san!

Freud-san! Why didn't you say so earlier!
 Does that mean you might be Kinoshita Arinori-san or Noda Shu-san? I've never heard of a unit called Flint & Freud!

☪ †

《Posted by: TomTom》April 30th (Sun) 22:25
☐ Freud-san's true identity

I inquired at Meguro Pythagoras, and it turns out that Freud's partner, Flint-san, apparently played in a band with Lily back in middle school. Lily was in a band before Philia!
 This is news to me too.

I should have known. But there was no information about this in any Lily-related articles.
 The band's name was "Bradberry Orchestra," and apparently Lily, aka Keiko Suzuki, was in charge of songwriting and composition!
 Does this mean that Lily's roots might be found there?!
 Wow! I want to hear it! Freud-san, do you have any tapes?

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 22:30
☐ Freud-san!

Freud-san! I'm sorry for saying such terrible things. I sincerely apologize! I want it too!
 "Bradberry Orchestra" is the best!

《Posted by: TomTom》April 30th (Sun) 22:42
☐ Bradberry Orchestra

The words "Bradberry Orchestra" are swirling around in my head. I'm dizzy. My mouth is dry and I'm going crazy! I don't think I'll be able to sleep tonight!
 Lily in her teens... I'm in my teens too.
 I feel like Lily has suddenly descended right next to me.
 Lily in her school uniform... just imagining it is driving me crazy!

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 22:45
☐ Lily in a school uniform

That's right, TomTom-kun.
 Lily in a school uniform!
 The diva of Ether used to wear a uniform and go to school.

If she appeared at Meguro Pythagoras, does that mean she lives nearby? If so, could her high school be Hinode Women's Academy? If that's the case, it's near my place! There's a women's pro wrestling dojo nearby! Oh man,

Things are going to get busy from now on.

《Posted by: Satie》April 30th (Sun) 22:48

☐ Re. Lily in a school uniform

Lily doesn't go to Hinode, does she? I think she goes to an American school in Tamagawa.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 30th (Sun) 22:51

☐ That's impossible!

If she went to Hinode, she'd be classmates with Yuka Mukai. I don't want that to be true.

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 22:53

☐ Yuka Mukai

I wonder why Yuka Mukai hasn't been expelled yet? Anyway, it's true that it's hard to imagine Lily walking through the Gonnosuke-zaka shopping district.

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 22:55

☐ I don't really care, but

I don't really care, but
is it true that Yuka Mukai is doing drugs?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 30th (Sun) 22:58

☐ Hey, hey, Bear-san!

Hey, hey, Bear-san!

That's not what we're talking about.

It's not about the school uniform or anything like that.

Satie-san, please try to get your hands on the Bradberry Orchestra tape!

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 30th (Sun) 23:01

☐ Business talk > Bear-san

This is a business talk.

Sleepy Head-san, please close your eyes.

To Bear-san.

It's not meth, it's weed.

It seems that everyone around Maki Haru, who was recently arrested, were habitual users, and there are rumors of a large-scale operation soon.

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 23:03

☐ Business talk > Ironman 29-san

Speaking of which, KK also seems to be in deep trouble.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》April 30th (Sun) 23:05

☐ Correction

"Large-scale operation" was a mistake, it should have been "large-scale investigation." I apologize for the correction.

《Posted by: Paparazzi》April 30th (Sun) 23:21

☐ I saw it!

Nice to meet you all. I'm sorry to bring up a five-year-old story, but I saw Kusayanagi Hiroshi at Musashi-Kosugi station. He was wearing an Aloha shirt and sunglasses, and seemed to be waiting for someone. I rushed to a kiosk to buy a disposable camera and tried to secretly take a picture, but at that moment, a woman came out of the ticket gate... and guess what! I have the photo I took at that time, but I don't know what to do with it. I thought about sending it to Focus magazine, but I don't want to cause trouble for them. If you want to know who Kusayanagi Hiroshi was meeting, please email me. I'll give it to you cheap.
papa@mama.co.jp

《Posted by: Asuka Inochi》April 30th (Sun) 23:23

☐ Mourning Asuka

Aida Asuka is already married, it seems. My aunt's friend saw her at a relative's funeral. She had two children with her. She seemed to be working hard. She seems to have a good personality.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》April 30th (Sun) 23:26

☐ Uh, that's annoying

Paparazzi-san, Asuka Inochi-san,

Could you please do that kind of thing on a different site? Bear-san and Ironman 29-san, you two are lacking Ether. Satie-san, is it okay to post this kind of talk?

《Posted by: Amika》April 30th (Sun) 23:27

☐ It's painful

I also find this kind of topic painful.
Even if we talk about freedom of speech...

《Posted by: Satie》April 30th (Sun) 23:31

☐ Words from Satie

The administrator's view is that it's okay to talk about anything. Whether something is pleasant or unpleasant, it is a personal feeling, so it's difficult for me to regulate it. However, while speech is free, expressing your displeasure is also free. Please try to resolve it among yourselves.

《Posted by: Bear》April 30th (Sun) 23:34

☐ I'm sorry

I'll refrain from it.

Ç†

《Posted by: TomTom》May 1st (Mon) 20:10

☐ Meguro Pythagoras

I went to Meguro Pythagoras today. Nagai Kemitsuru was having a live show today. He's still active, huh? Oops, the paparazzi bug is acting up again... Anyway, putting that aside, the place where Lily was supposed to be the other day... with Nagai Kemitsuru standing there, I was hoping to catch a whiff of her aura, but no matter what... ah, if only Nagai Kemitsuru wasn't there. I'm probably the only audience member who was stomping their feet thinking that. It was a day where I was thoroughly messed with by Nagai Kemitsuru. But, Nagai-san, good luck with your work.

Hey, Amika-san, could you tell me more about that day?

《Posted by: Angelica》May 1st (Mon) 20:15

☐ Sorry to bother you again

Sorry to bother you again.
I also saw Nagai Kemitsuru.

《Posted by: Amika》May 1st (Mon) 20:21

☐ That day

Flint & Freud were an acoustic band with twin male vocals.

Because they sang in a high key, it wasn't manly at all. It was like Simon & Garfunkel. Lily's appearance was sudden.

"Today, an old friend of Flint's has come to hang out, so I wonder if we can have her sing a song." Freud-san said that. Then, a woman with long hair, who was at the very back of the stage... Aaaa, no good. My body is still shaking talking about it. At that time, my heart felt like it was going to jump out. I told myself that she was a woman who just happens to look a lot like Lily. If I didn't, I felt like I was going to faint.

She sat down on the prepared chair, adjusted the microphone stand to her mouth, and said in a low voice, "I'm Keiko Suzuki from Class 4, Year 1." The whole venue laughed. But it was amicable. Her appearance at Flint & Freud's live show might not have been the first time. Because no one was shouting, and it was too amicable. There was also a feeling that all the audience members were quite old.

There, she sang three songs. Because they were unfamiliar songs, I thought they were probably songs from the band Philia, but perhaps they were songs from the Bradberry Orchestra era.

I remember the lyrics "white flowers" or something like that. Was there a song like this in Philia?

It was so long ago, I don't really remember the details. But it felt so natural, I was deeply moved.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 1st (Mon) 20:25

☐ Honorary Member!

> I remember the lyrics "white flowers" or something like that.
> Was there a song like this in Philia?

No! That's definitely a Bradberry Orchestra song!

Amika-chan, can I make you an honorary member starting today? Because you've become a living witness of history.

《Posted by: Paparazzi》 May 1st (Mon) 20:26

☐ Gay?

Is it true that Nagai Kemitsuru is gay?

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 21:15

☐ Why Lily performed live

Since the Quatre incident in December, there have been rumors that Lily-san would refrain from performing live, right? There was also information that they were planning a live show for Christmas, but it seems they didn't do it after all. I'm sure Lily-san really wanted to sing.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 21:17

☐ Christmas Live

The Christmas live show was definitely planned for December 22nd at Osaka HipB. I'm sure it was cancelled because of that incident.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 21:20

☐ Re. Why Lily performed live

That incident... nothing more came of it, did it? Did they catch the culprit? I was at Quatre that day too. Was the perpetrator really a Lily fan?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 21:22

☐ The Quatre Incident

I was there too. I saw people screaming as they were knocked over like dominoes. Ambulances came and some people were taken away, right? At that time, I thought it was just an accident, but I was surprised to learn later that it was a murder case. But with so many people there, there's no way they could find the culprit, is there? But there are also many love hotels around there, so I wonder if it wasn't a completely different incident? A woman from a top company died around there before, didn't she?

《Posted by: Ironman 29》 May 5th (Fri) 21:24

☐ The Quatre Incident

That area is a bit seedy, isn't it?

I think it's quite possible that it was a separate incident. By the way, about the woman from the top company...

Wasn't that incident recently made into a TV drama? The one Eguchi Yosuke was in.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 21:25

☐ The Quatre Incident

I don't think it was the same incident, was it?

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 21:28

☐ Re. The Quatre Incident

It's truly sad that someone died. I'm very upset to think that the person who stabbed them was a Lily fan. I hope that's not true.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 5th (Fri) 21:32

☐ About the Quatre Incident

I think everyone knows about the Quatre Incident, but for those who don't, please take a look here:

<http://www.lily-chou-chou.com/media/htm/teito1209.htm>

<http://www.lily-chou-chou.com/media/htm/teito1211.htm>

[Translator Note: The 2 links posted by Satie were broken, but there are archive of them on the Lilyholic website

<http://www.lily-chou-chou.jp/holic/media/htm/teito1209.htm>

<http://www.lily-chou-chou.jp/holic/media/htm/teito1211.htm>

Here's the working link if you want to access it yourself.]

《December 9, 1999, Teito Newspaper - Morning Edition》
Deaths at Rock Concert. Audience Falls Like Dominoes After Live Show.

Last night, an accident occurred in front of Shibuya Quatre where the audience fell like dominoes.

Dozens of people were taken to the hospital by ambulance in this terrible incident, and Hoshino Shusuke-kun (15), a second-year student at Daiichi Nagano Junior High School in Nagano City, Nagano Prefecture, died at the hospital. Shibuya Quatre opened in 1990. It had become a popular spot for young people, but recently, due to financial difficulties, they had just reduced their staff.

The Shibuya Police Department is currently investigating whether there was a lack of guidance for the audience on the live house side.

There is a cluster of multi-tenant buildings near the entrance, and there have often been complaints from the surrounding area about audience members staying late into the night. On that day, a concert by a talent named Lily Chou-Chou was being held, and those involved said that the fan base was relatively calm.

《December 11, 1999, Teito Newspaper - Morning Edition》
Live House Accident, Suspicion of Murder Surfaces. Stab Wound Found on Deceased.

A stab wound was found on the back of Hoshino Shusuke-kun (15), a second-year student at Daiichi Nagano Junior High School in Nagano City, Nagano Prefecture, who died in the domino-like fall accident at Shibuya Quatre on December 8th. As a result of the autopsy, the stab wound reached the heart from the back, and this is considered the direct cause of death. It is possible that Hoshino-kun was involved in some kind of incident. On that day, Shibuya Quatre...

Singer Lily Chou-chou (real name: Keiko Suzuki), who was performing at the concert, is a charismatic figure who receives enthusiastic support from some young people. In July of this year, there was also an incident in which a high school student, dissatisfied with the content of her new album, committed suicide in protest.

《December 16, 1999, Weekly Today》
The Black Aura Emitted by a Charisma.

"Once you experience Lily, you can't listen to any other music, it just sounds like noise," one fan replies. Lily Chou-Chou is a popular artist among young people these days. Recently, unfortunate incidents have been occurring among fans who have been drawn into her unique world.

On December 8th, at Shibuya Quatre, where Lily Chou-Chou's concert was being held, fans fell like dominoes, and Hoshino Shusuke-kun (15), a second-year student at Daiichi Nagano Junior High School in Nagano City, Nagano Prefecture, died. A stab wound was found on his back, and the Shibuya Police Department began investigating the case as a murder incident.

In July, one of her enthusiastic fans attempted suicide in protest against the quality of her new album. A cryptic message was found in the suicide note: "Lily, who rots the Ether. The eclipsed sun will never shine again."

"Ether" is used among Lily fans as a synonym for "aura." It is a word that Lily Chou-Chou herself frequently uses in interviews in several music magazines.

Immediately after the suicide, staff members broke into Lily's house and caused an attempted assault incident. And then, there's this murder incident. Fans and staff, captivated by her unique aura, sometimes commit suicide, go crazy, and kill people. It's a story reminiscent of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, but what kind of magic is hidden in the voice of such a charismatic person?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 22:07

☐ Speaking of which

Because of that incident, Lily was suddenly labeled a "cursed woman." I can't bear to see Lily being violated in weekly magazines. I'm seething with anger.

Come to think of it, Philia doesn't seem to have been at the live show that day. It was right after that, wasn't it, that Philia's site disappeared. Because of that, the usual report meeting couldn't be held either. I wonder if Satie wasn't there either?

《Posted by: Satie》 May 5th (Fri) 22:09

☐ Sorry!

Sorry! I had some urgent business that day and couldn't go. I saw the news about the incident.

So, the culprit hasn't been caught yet?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 22:13

☐ I was there too

I went to Quatre too. That's right, the report meeting hasn't happened yet.

I saw Bear-san, Ironman 29-kun, and Pascal-kun. And then, Blue Cat-kun.

Come to think of it, I didn't see Philia.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 22:15

☐ Um...

Um, I don't really understand what you're talking about. Are you all, by any chance, acquaintances? Did you have an offline meetup?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 22:18

☐ Re. Um...

It wasn't exactly a meetup. It was a slightly different kind of meetup. Actually, we decided to meet at Quatre that day, each with some kind of mark to recognize each other.

However, the rule was that we wouldn't call out to each other at the venue. We were supposed to report about what happened later on the website. But Philia's site broke down and we couldn't post on the BBS. Eventually, it became a "404 Not Found" page. I wonder if Philia is okay?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 22:22

☐ Those days...

Those days, there were unpleasant things on the site too. I just wanted to refresh my mood. I was embarrassed, so I didn't bring any mark. Everyone was wearing their own decided sign, so I recognized them immediately. Bear-san had a bear plushie, right?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 22:25

☐ That story

Let's stop talking about that. Our new friend will fall asleep.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 22:28

☐ Could it be

Listening to various stories, could it be that Philia-san was somehow involved in the incident? I'm a little concerned that the site went down after the incident. Don't you think so?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 22:29

☐ You're sharp!

TomTom-kun, you're sharp! That's right. I was also wondering about it. Could it be that Philia was the one who was killed?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 22:30

☐ No way

No way. You're kidding, right? I won't be able to sleep tonight.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 5th (Fri) 22:32

☐ Speaking of which

Speaking of which, Blue Cat-kun and Pascal-kun haven't shown up. I wonder what they're doing.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 22:34

☐ Creepy

It's kind of creepy.

I wonder if Blue Cat-kun and Pascal-kun were also involved in the incident.

Don't you think so?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 22:35

☐ To the police...

Did you report that to the police? I think you should. They haven't found the culprit yet.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 5th (Fri) 22:37

☐ Actually...

Actually, I reported it to the police. But they just took a statement and that was it. I realized that even with a murder case, the police surprisingly didn't seem to care.

In the end, I couldn't find out if it was really Philia.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 22:39

☐ Slackers!

Are the police always like that?

Even if someone died?
Don't they properly investigate the victim's identity?
Isn't that awful?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 22:40

☐ That's how the world is

That's just how the world is.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 5th (Fri) 22:42

☐ I mean

I mean, the victim's identity is already known, right?
Angelica-san, you're mistaken. Philia is just an online presence. The victim's real identity was immediately revealed and it was in the newspapers. When I went to the police, I inquired under that person's name. But an online handle has nothing to do with the case. Take a look here!
<http://www.lily-chou-chou.com/media/htm/tody1216.htm>

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 22:44

☐ Oh shoot

You're right.

[Translator Note: Here's a working link
<http://www.lily-chou-chou.jp/holic/media/htm/tody1216.htm>]

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 22:46

☐ I see.

That's right. Philia isn't his real name, is it? When you're online, don't you sometimes get confused? When you think about it, everyone is anonymous, but you lose track of that boundary.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 22:48

☐ Re. I mean

But when you think about it, we have a strange relationship, don't we? Real human relationships are born in this anonymous world, different from our daily lives. It's so mysterious. By the way, Amika is my real name, but everyone else has pretty unique names. Nevira71-san, what does Nevira71 mean?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 22:51

☐ Deep thoughts

We don't know each other's faces. We've never heard each other's voices. But even so, there are people who fall in love. It makes me think of Blue Cat and Winter. I wonder if they're doing well.

Ah, by the way, those two were like that on the previous site. A hot and heavy relationship. I wonder if it's okay to write this kind of thing?

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 22:53

☐ Huh

Wow, so that's what happened.

But I kind of understand what you're talking about.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 5th (Fri) 22:55

☐ Re. I mean

Amika-san, aren't you projecting yourself and TomTom-san onto that? But, that offline meetup idea from earlier is great. Let's definitely have an offline meetup next time Lily has a live show!

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 22:57

☐ What do you mean?

Angelica-san, I don't understand what you're saying. Please stop making strange implications.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 22:59

☐ To Angelica-san

If you're talking about the glider incident, you're overthinking it. Well, I don't mind if it's Amika-san.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 5th (Fri) 23:02

☐ TomTom-san

I'm concerned because I think your comment could lead to misunderstandings.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 5th (Fri) 23:02

☐ To TomTom-san

I'm hurt.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:04

☐ I'm sorry

I'm sorry. I got a little carried away. What I wanted to say was, even if we're going to have the same synchronicity, I don't want to do it with someone I dislike.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 5th (Fri) 23:05

☐ To TomTom-san

For example, me?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:07

☐ To Luka-san

No way. Why would you think that?

《Posted by: Bear》 May 5th (Fri) 23:09

☐ You're popular, TomTom-san

You're popular, TomTom-san. I'm envious. But that's how Blue Cat and Winter ended up together.

It makes me nostalgic.

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 5th (Fri) 23:11

☐ I mean

I mean, Amika-chan has clearly said she's bothered, you know.
Persistent guys are disliked.

Tom Yum-kun, you know.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:13

☐ It's irrelevant

When unrelated people get involved, the conversation gets complicated, so please refrain from it.

I truly apologize to Amika-san for causing her trouble.

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 5th (Fri) 23:15

☐ I mean

Isn't it Tom Yum-kun who's irrelevant?

In the first place, you're not a member of this site, are you?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:17

☐ By the way

By the way, have you searched up what Venus is?

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 5th (Fri) 23:19

☐ Shall we compete?

Shall we compete to see who's the fake?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:20

☐ Basically...

Basically, I don't understand what you're talking about.
What? Nevira71?

Is it the name of a laxative?

《Posted by: Ironman 29》 May 5th (Fri) 23:23

☐ TomTom-kun

TomTom-kun, personal attacks are not good.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 5th (Fri) 23:24

☐ Official site

It was a hot topic on the official site too. Flint & Freud's live show. Freud-san seems to have posted there too.

Lily sang songs from the Bradberry Orchestra era that day:

1. 交差する言葉 (Kousa suru Kotoba) - Intersecting Words
2. 夢見る機械 (Yumemiru Kikai) - Dreaming Machine
3. 夏の断片 (Natsu no Kanpen) - Summer Fragments

...is the title, it seems.
Three more unknown songs have been added.
This shock is likely to continue for a while.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 5th (Fri) 23:25
☐ To Ironman 29-san

I'm the one being personally attacked, you know. Please help me.
Nevira71-san, please report your findings on Venus.

Ç†

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 01:12
☐ Venus

Of course I know about Venus. What? You want to say that the UFO I saw was Venus? Haha. Who would mistake a star for a UFO? Oh, there's one. What's your name?
Tom Yum-kun?
So, you mistook a UFO for Venus!
...You're an idiot.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 01:14
☐ Please answer my question if you can

What is Nevira71? The name of a building near the station?

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 01:16
☐ Good grief

It's frustrating dealing with men who have no knowledge.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 01:18
☐ I'm sorry for my ignorance

Please tell me.
Is it the name of a department store?

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 01:19
☐ Haha!

I won't tell you.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 01:20
☐ I see

Actually, I didn't really want to know.
I'm not constipated.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 6th (Sat) 01:21
☐ Stop fighting

You're bothering everyone.

《Posted by: Ashura Baron》 May 6th (Sat) 01:29

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. I've been lurking for a while, but it seems there's a storm brewing here. Reading through it, I feel uncomfortable. As Bear-san said, it's really annoying. I wish you'd stop. What was it again? TomTom-san? Why don't you just stop already?

《Posted by: TomTom》May 6th (Sat) 01:31

☐ Ashura-san

Nice to meet you.
But it's not like I started the fight.
Please understand that.

《Posted by: Lalah Stein》May 6th (Sat) 01:37

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. I'm basically a lurker. I always enjoy reading this site. However, ever since TomTom-san started posting here, it's completely gone downhill. He's making excuses to Ashura-san, but isn't that like the pot calling the kettle black? I'm looking at this site with my friends, and everyone is angry at TomTom-san.

《Posted by: TomTom》May 6th (Sat) 01:39

☐ To Lalah Stein-san

I apologize if I have made everyone uncomfortable.
Please forgive me.

《Posted by: Lalah Stein》May 6th (Sat) 01:41

☐ To TomTom-san

I think you're apologizing to the wrong person. You won't resolve anything unless you apologize to Nevira71.

《Posted by: Battle Fever J》May 6th (Sat) 01:43

☐ Do you remember me?

I'm Battle Fever J, who used to occasionally show up on the previous site. Does everyone remember me? I've been lurking for a while, but I can't stay silent, so I'm posting. In the first place, it was TomTom-san who first messed with Nevira71, wasn't it? Do you remember that? You, TomTom-san, laughed at Nevira71 first. TomTom-san has completely forgotten what he did and is acting like he's the victim. I can't understand that.

《Posted by: TomTom》May 6th (Sat) 01:45

☐ Hey, hey

Why are all these lurkers suddenly showing up? I didn't laugh at him, and I've already explained myself about that.

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 01:45

☐ Thank you everyone

Thank you everyone for the great support.
To be honest, I was really troubled by his appearance.
Please tell this stubborn person more.

《Posted by: The Flower Child Lunlun》 May 6th (Sat) 01:46

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. I'm The Flower Child Lunlun.
Frankly speaking, I think TomTom-san is single-handedly
destroying this BBS.
I feel sorry for Nevira71-san.
Nevira71-san, hang in there.

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 01:48

☐ Thank you, The Flower Child Lunlun-san

I'm so moved (;○;).
I'm truly grateful to everyone!
m(;;-;)m Thank you.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》 May 6th (Sat) 01:48

☐ Haven't you seen the result yet?

With public opinion so strongly in favor of Nevira71-san,
TomTom-kun, isn't it about time for you to leave?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 01:49

☐ To Ironman 29-san

I've already apologized.
It's Nevira71 who's being weird.

《Posted by: Battle Fever J》 May 6th (Sat) 01:50

☐ TomTom-san

You're a newcomer acting way too arrogant. It's really
unpleasant to watch.
You should just leave.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 6th (Sat) 01:51

☐ To TomTom-san

Please don't leave. It'll hurt.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 6th (Sat) 01:52

☐ To TomTom-san

If things have turned out this way because I said I was
concerned, then it's my fault. It's not that I was offended by
anything TomTom-san said.
Please understand that.
I don't think TomTom-san is as bad as everyone says.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 6th (Sat) 01:54

☐ To Amika-san

I'm hurt by what you said.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 6th (Sat) 01:55

☐ To Luka-san

Why? I don't understand what you mean.

《Posted by: Lalah Stein》 May 6th (Sat) 01:55

☐ Anyway

Isn't it already beyond debate that TomTom is a troll?
The only reason we're even wasting time on this is because
TomTom is here. Don't you think the Ether is starting to run
out little by little? Isn't it about time to stop?
TomTom-san, could you please just leave?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 01:59

☐ To Lalah Stein-san

Please give me some time to think. I'll stop posting for a
while.

《Posted by: Ashura Baron》 May 6th (Sat) 02:00

☐ TomTom!

I don't think Nevira71-san will be satisfied with that.
Anyway...

Get out of this site.

Promise you'll never come back here again.

《Posted by: The Flower Child Lunlun》 May 6th (Sat) 02:00

☐ Written Oath

I think we should make TomTom-san write a written oath.
Promising never to come back here again.

《Posted by: Ashura Baron》 May 6th (Sat) 02:01

☐ That's a good idea!

I agree!

《Posted by: Battle Fever J》 May 6th (Sat) 02:01

☐ GOOD IDEA!

I strongly agree!

《Posted by: Lalah Stein》 May 6th (Sat) 02:02

☐ Lunlun-san, that's it!

That settles it!

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 6th (Sat) 02:03

☐ Hahaha!

Tom Yum-kun, serves you right! Hahaha!

《Posted by: Ironman 29》May 6th (Sat) 02:04

☐ Good grief

It can't be helped. Personally, I don't care either way, but since it's a majority vote, isn't it okay to just banish him?

《Posted by: TomTom》May 6th (Sat) 02:06

☐ Why is it turning out like this?

Satie-san, Bear-san, Sleepy Head-san, what do you all think?
Amika-san, Luka-san, Angelica-san?

《Posted by: Angelica》May 6th (Sat) 02:08

☐ I...

I... I don't really know.

《Posted by: Luka》May 6th (Sat) 02:09

☐ TomTom-san

Why did you write Amika-san's name before mine?
I'm hurt.

《Posted by: Amika》May 6th (Sat) 02:12

☐ To TomTom-san

I don't think you should leave.

《Posted by: Satie》May 6th (Sat) 02:14

☐ From the Administrator

I don't think you should leave. This is a place where we can freely talk about Lily. My opinion is that I don't want you to bring your personal dispute here.

《Posted by: Bear》May 6th (Sat) 02:16

☐ My opinion

I don't really understand. Well, I understand that it's a boring argument though.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》May 6th (Sat) 02:18

☐ Something like this happened before...

Something like this happened before. When you're posting, you tend to forget about the people who are lurking, but I realize that there are actually quite a few of them. I think this BBS is also for those people. I don't know if TomTom-san should leave or not, but I want you to consider that too.

《Posted by: Dream Child》May 6th (Sat) 02:19

☐ Opinion

The sadness of a forgotten existence.
Names that were not written down.

I'm in pain.
I'll cast a vote for Nevira71-san.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》 May 6th (Sat) 02:22
☐ Results Report

Regarding the TomTom expulsion issue.
Votes in favor (those who want him to leave) ... 7 votes
Votes against (those who think he can stay) ... 2 votes
Neutral, or unsure, or don't care ... 4 votes

Therefore, TomTom-san, please leave.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 02:25
☐ I understand

I understand now. I'll leave this place. But to those who tried to chase me out, your Ether is a bright red fake.
Just remember that!

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:27
☐ Wait a minute!

TomTom-kun, wait a minute!
No matter how I look at it, these four are suspicious.
Ashura Baron / Lalah Stein

Battle Fever J / The Flower Child Lunlun

These are Nevira71's alternate personalities, right? Or rather, since Nevira71 and Ironman 29 are the same person, that means all of these are just one person.

Then the vote would be 2 to 2 for and against. I'll cast my vote against. That makes it 2 to 3, so you win. That means you don't have to leave.
Isn't this good enough? This contest.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 02:29
☐ Pascal!

Isn't that Pascal!
You were doing well, weren't you!

探偵パスカル現れ、ついに謎の封印が解かれる。

事件は半年前、渋谷キャトルで。

Detective Pascal appears, and finally the seal on the mystery is broken.

The incident occurred half a year ago, at Shibuya Quatre.

第三章 飛行船

Chapter 3: Airship



根拠も何もない 昼下がりの街で
曇ったムレの中 息をしているのです
ウィ・ウォナ・ゴー

懲りない欲望が 突然吹き出して
巨大な飛行船 アタシを打ち上げる

存在は成り立たない
混迷が渦巻く
救命道具も 役に立たない

ハサミの間から 街を覗いている
巨大な飛行船 アタシを乗せていく

正体は謎のままの
現在を重ねて
救命道具も 役に立たない
急降下しながら 飛べ

ウィ・ウォナ・ゴー

Without a single reason, in the afternoon city
I breathe within the cloudy haze
We wanna go

Unrelenting desires suddenly burst forth
A giant airship launches me

Existence is unsustainable
Confusion swirls
Safety equipment is useless

Peering at the city through the scissors
The giant airship carries me away

Its true form remains a mystery
Overlaying the present
Safety equipment is useless
Fly while plummeting

We wanna go

《Posted by: Bear》 May 6th (Sat) 02:30

☐ Yo!

Long time no see! How have you been?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:31

☐ Long time no see

Hey there.

Hey everyone, it's been a while.

Nice to meet you to those who are new here.

I knew this place opened, but I've been lurking.

Sorry about that.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 02:33

☐ Welcome back.

You seem well. I've been waiting for you.

But why were you lurking until now?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:35

☐ Long time no see

I'm glad to see you're doing well, Satie.

There were various reasons why I was lurking.

Well, don't rush me, I'll talk about it eventually.

《Posted by: Lalah Stein》 May 6th (Sat) 02:36

☐ Same person?

Pascal-san and the others are arousing quite a bit of suspicion, aren't they?(^-^;) I wonder who I'm the same person as? I am me. I wish you wouldn't invalidate my vote without my permission.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:37

☐ Nevira71

Nevira71, show yourself. And if you're going to use another personality, put more effort into your handle. Anyone can see it's all your otaku hobbies!

《Posted by: Bear》 May 6th (Sat) 02:38

☐ So that means...?

What? So that means Ironman 29 and Nevira71 are the same person?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:40

☐ You didn't know?

Huh? Bear-san, you didn't know? I thought it was common knowledge since the "LilyPhilia" days. I guess it's not so obvious, huh?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 02:41

☐ No way!?

I didn't know at all.

Does that mean we've been tricked all along?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 02:43

☐ Get out!

This is the first time I've been treated so badly.
Nevira71, shouldn't you be the one leaving?

《Posted by: Amika》 May 6th (Sat) 02:45

☐ It's unfortunate, but

It's unfortunate, but I think so too.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 6th (Sat) 02:48

☐ Rule violation

That's a complete rule violation.

I'm extremely uncomfortable that someone like that was
mixed in with us.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 6th (Sat) 02:49

☐ It's Luka

I'm hurt. Nevira71-san, please leave.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:53

☐ Well, whatever

Come on, let it go. For my sake, since I'm the one who
exposed him, please let it slide. It's not like I wanted anyone
to leave, that's why I revealed his true identity.

If Nevira71 leaves, then it'll be my fault. I should have kept
quiet. I'm sure Nevira71 didn't mean any harm. Well, he
probably hated TomTom-kun. But if you trace it back, it's just
a childish fight. Let's just call it a draw and end this here.
Is everyone okay with that?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 02:54

☐ Roger that!

Let's do that! I'm already tired of this pointless discussion.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 02:55

☐ Get out!

Nevira71 hasn't shown himself, but I guess he's gone? I kinda
wanted to hear his side of the story one last time.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 02:57

☐ So, I'm here.

I haven't left.
I'm still here.
Just lurking.

Ç†

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 17:27

☐ Once again

I'll write again about why I was lurking.
Last year, actually, I was also at Shibuya Quatre.
I was caught up in that panic there and got injured. In the newspaper reports, I was actually one of the injured people mentioned. I thought I had a pretty strong personality, but when you get caught up in a real incident like that, it really gets to you.

Do you understand? Being injured means I was right next to the deceased, Hoshino Shusuke-san. When we were being crushed, I think he was probably near me. Maybe it was Hoshino-san that I hit with my elbow. Maybe right on that elbow was Hoshino-san's throat or something. If that's the case, then maybe... maybe I was the one who killed him, you know? When I think about that, I couldn't sleep at night. That's why, even after this site was created, I just couldn't bring myself to write anything.

I'm glad to see you're all doing well.

It seems no other injuries were reported, so I'm relieved. "Glide" was great.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 6th (Sat) 18:12

☐ Welcome back, Pascal-kun!

Long time no see!
So, you were caught up in the incident back then.
That must have been tough. But it wasn't your fault. The perpetrator is to blame.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 18:17

☐ That day.

I saw on the news later that someone named Hoshino-san had died. They said he was stabbed to death, but given the situation, I don't think anyone knows for sure how he died. He might have been stabbed. But, he might have also died from being crushed. It was that bad. At that time.

This was also mentioned in magazines,
At that time, someone shouted, "It's Lily!" and that's what caused the panic. That much is true. There's no doubt about it.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 18:19

☐ That day...

Unfortunately, I didn't witness the chaos that day.

How should I say it, anyway, I think it's better not to blame yourself too much.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 18:21

☐ Sorry for worrying you

No, no, everyone, don't worry about me so much. I might have exaggerated a bit. I'm not as badly shaken as I made out. On the contrary, if I was involved in that incident and I was all cheerful, people would probably say, "What's wrong with this guy?" So I was just pretending to be shaken. Well, it's true I was a little shaken. I'm really sorry for making you worry. But I'm okay. My injuries weren't serious. By the way, Blue Cat-kun hasn't shown up. Is Blue Cat-kun alright?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 18:22

☐ Blue Cat-san

I'm also worried about Blue Cat-san.
I'm just hoping he wasn't involved in the incident.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 18:24

☐ To Sleepy Head-san

Everyone is being indirect, but what you're really wondering is whether the deceased Hoshino Shusuke was Philia or Blue Cat-kun, right?

If I'm allowed to speak frankly,
I honestly think that's highly likely.
In other words, if that possibility exists, then it's Blue Cat who was killed.
Blue Cat's death theory.
This is my deduction.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 18:25

☐ Blue Cat-kun?

No way. Why on earth...? No, no, that kind of talk is inappropriate here.
If possible, please tell me the details by email.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 18:26

☐ Blue Cat-san?

You mean Blue Cat-san is Hoshino-san?
Then what about Philia-san?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 18:28

☐ My deduction

Satie, if everyone's okay with it, let's talk about it here.
Sleepy Head-san, honestly, I don't know about Philia.
But what I can say is, since that incident, both Blue Cat-kun and Philia have been missing.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 18:30

☐ However

However, Pascal-san. You were also missing until today.

《Posted by: Satie》May 6th (Sat) 18:32

☐ Isn't that reasoning too bold?

People who are lurking exist, we just can't see them. If Blue Cat-kun and Philia are watching, please post something here!

《Posted by: Pascal》May 6th (Sat) 18:47

☐ My reasoning

Philia might be seeing this, I don't know. But if my reasoning is correct, Blue Cat-kun isn't seeing this. If my reasoning is correct, Blue Cat-kun should already be dead. Well, everyone will probably tilt their heads wondering what my basis is. I'll explain it now.

The story goes back half a year. It's about when we were going in and out of the "LilyPhilia" BBS. There was a hacking incident there. Satie and the others remember it, but for those who don't know, just in case. There was an incident where Blue Cat-kun's email was stolen by hacking. The culprit is still unknown. Whether he was from the ROM group or the RAM group, we don't know.

But it's true that there was someone who held a grudge against Blue Cat-kun.

They hacked into Blue Cat's computer without permission and stole data. And to make matters worse, they publicly released it on a forum. When I was watching TV the other day, they were talking about a similar incident. Apparently, that kind of software is relatively easy to get. Everyone, be careful. It's better to unplug the phone line when you're not using your computer.

As they also said on TV, that's a clear crime. The perpetrator is someone with hacking skills. They must have known that much. In other words, they were aware that they were taking a big risk. In a sense, they knew what they were doing when they crossed the line. They stepped into the realm of crime. Even if they stabbed Blue Cat, it wouldn't be surprising. In other words, weren't they already acting strange when they spread Blue Cat's data last year?

Rereading this, I feel like it's a bit disjointed and doesn't quite get to the point, but this is my reasoning. I've had a feeling about this for a while, so I've been checking this BBS, but Blue Cat hasn't shown themselves at all, and I've just been getting more and more suspicious on my own.

Satie, is it okay if we continue talking about this here?
Please give me permission.

Everyone, this is just my own speculation.
If you have any objections, please don't hesitate to say so.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》May 6th (Sat) 18:58

☐ To Pascal-san

I believe Blue Cat-san is safe.

Actually, I saw Blue Cat-san at the scene. But if you ask me if that person was the victim, Hoshino-san, I honestly don't know. The Hoshino-san in the news was smiling, had a buzz cut, and was a second-year middle school student, right? But the Hoshino-san I saw at the scene had long hair, and his face looked completely different.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 6th (Sat) 19:01

☐ It's Bear

The Blue Cat-kun I saw looked a little similar to the victim, but... Anyway, Pascal, if your deduction is correct, where did Philia go? The disappearance of LilyPhilia is a creepy incident in itself.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:03

☐ To Sleepy Head-san

I also saw him at the scene, but I can't connect him with that photo. But can you really trust photos like that? With longer hair and different clothes, he might look like a completely different person. Besides, the photo in the news was probably from when he was a first-year middle school student or something, I'm sure.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:05

☐ Re. My deduction

> Please give me permission.

I'm fine with it.

Is everyone else okay with it?

However, if the hacker is the culprit, what's the motive? The hacking incident in question was certainly malicious. But killing someone requires a considerable motive, doesn't it? It feels like it's on a different level than online pranks.

Do you have any ideas about that?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:10

☐ My deduction 2

Maybe it was "jealousy."

Blue Cat-kun was close to Winter-san. Winter-san used to come to the BBS of the previous site. Blue Cat-kun and Winter-san were personally emailing each other. However, someone stole those emails and published them on the BBS. If it was a prank, it was too malicious. Winter-san couldn't bear it and disappeared from the site. Blue Cat-kun disappeared for a while, but soon came back. But at that time, we didn't investigate who the culprit was, did we? Perhaps the culprit was secretly in love with Winter-san and deeply resented Blue Cat-kun?

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:15

☐ Re. My deduction 2

I see. But, isn't that a bit of a leap? Oops, my Kansai dialect is showing... Rather, isn't it possible that Blue Cat-kun was the culprit and the victim was the hacker?

Shouldn't that also be considered? Blue Cat-kun must have also hated the culprit considerably.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:20

☐ However

However, in that case, how would Blue Cat-kun find the hacker? We don't know who the hacker is, and there were no clues, so there's no way to find them, right? Blue Cat-kun had a green apple. That's why Bear and Sleepy Head were able to find him. That's the key point. The culprit doesn't know Blue Cat-san. But they knew that Blue Cat-san had the green apple.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:23

☐ Re. However

No, I was just quoting your reasoning, and I don't even think the victim was Blue Cat-kun in the first place. If there's a possibility that Blue Cat-kun is the victim, I just thought the possibility of him being the culprit had a more visible motive.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:24

☐ To Pascal

Even so, this is getting too extreme. Pascal-kun, it's not good to have this kind of exchange here. If you want to talk about it, send me an email. I'll listen to you there.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:26

☐ The culprit

I'll say it clearly then.

The culprit is probably Philia.

That's why he quit the site.

At least the hacker is definitely Philia. He was the one who ran the site. He should have been very knowledgeable about computers.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:27

☐ Re. The culprit

Pascal-kun, that's not good.

Just because he ran the site doesn't necessarily mean he can hack. I certainly can't. Even though I'm managing this site. Anyway, please stop talking about this here.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:29

☐ The culprit

Just let me say a little more.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:30

☐ No!

No. It's too extreme. If you keep saying outrageous things, I'll delete them. Anyway, keep it to email.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:35

☐ The culprit

Go ahead and delete it. But before you do, let me say this. Speaking only of the RAM group, the people who weren't wearing any identifiers were Philia, Sleepy Head, and you, Satie. Sleepy Head has testified that she was there. You said you didn't come. No one saw you. You said you'd come wearing yellow sunglasses and a yellow varsity jacket as your identifier. But no one like that was there. You say you couldn't go, but without the yellow sunglasses and jacket, no one would have known it was you anyway.

It's okay if you delete this, but it'll be posted once.

I'm sure some people will read this. If you delete it, it'll look like you're the culprit.

Shall we meet once, Satie?

Actually, I saw the culprit. I know their face.

If you're the culprit, I'll recognize you immediately.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:37

☐ Re. The culprit

Are you suspecting me?

More importantly, did you really see the culprit?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:38

☐ Won't you delete it?

If you promise not to delete it, I'll write a little more.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 6th (Sat) 19:40

☐ Re. Won't you delete it?

I won't delete it, so tell me.

By the way, I'm not the culprit.

I don't mind meeting you.

Everyone, the administrator is getting a little heated.

I'll let Pascal-kun continue talking, so please bear with me. I also don't like being called the culprit.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 19:42

☐ My deduction

I don't know what kind of person Philia was, but everyone, aren't you forgetting someone important? A person who used many handles to try to frame others. Sometimes calling himself Nevira71, other times speaking as Ironman 29, and then transforming one after another into Ashura Baron, Lalah Stein, Battle Fever J, and The Flower Child Lunlun – a seven-faced phantom.

Isn't he the culprit in this incident?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:43

☐ To TomTom-san

That's a pretty good deduction.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 6th (Sat) 19:44

☐ I don't understand!

Isn't Philia the culprit?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:45

☐ To Sleepy Head

That's only if my deduction is correct.

Perhaps TomTom-san's deduction is correct.

Which one is correct, TomTom-san, shall we have a match?

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 19:46

☐ Pascal-san...

Are you sure it's not him?

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 6th (Sat) 19:48

☐ To Pascal-san

Pascal-san, I'm sorry, but what exactly happened on the previous site?

I'd appreciate it if you could tell me.

Even if you say "hacking," I don't really get it.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 6th (Sat) 19:52

☐ What happened at LilyPhilia?

> What exactly happened on the previous site?

As for that, I'm a bit hesitant to explain it here. After all, this is Satie-kun's site. If you're interested, please come in through the URL below. I've uploaded a part of the past logs.

<http://www.angel-sakurai.com/philia-bbs/>

[Note: "RAM" is an abbreviation for Random Access Memory. It allows both writing and reading. On the internet, it refers to people who also write messages, the opposite of "ROM" (lurker.)]

<http://www.angel-sakurai.com/philia-bbs/>

に、アクセスせよ。

1999年11月、「リリフィリア」の中で起きた事。

Access it.

November 1999, the events that occurred within "LilyPhilia."

第
四
章
愛
の
実
験

Chapter 4: Experiment of Love



I see you, You see me

(遠くを見る)

You see me, I see you

(遙か遠くを)

I see you, You see me and now

I'm in you, You're in me

(エーテルの海)

You're in me, I'm in you

(クォークの外)

I'm in you, You're in me and now

愛の実験が 私を迷わせる

愛の実験で 笑っているの？

アイハマイ アイハトプ (ソシテ)

アイハスル アイハカウ (ソシテ)

アイハサク アイハアイヲアイシテル

Life like dead

Dead like life

愛の実験が 私を迷わせる

愛の実験で 笑っているの？

I see you, You see me

(何処に生きてる)

You see me, I see you

(現在を生きてる)

I see you, You see me and now

I see you, You see me

(Looking into the distance)

You see me, I see you

(Into the far distance)

I see you, You see me and now

I'm in you, You're in me

(Sea of Ether)

You're in me, I'm in you

(Outside the Quark)

I'm in you, You're in me and now

The experiment of love makes me lose my way.

Are you laughing in the love experiment?

Love is dance, love is a leap (and)

Love is give, love is take (and)

Love is dry, love is love, I love you

Life like dead

Dead like life

The experiment of love makes me lose my way.

Are you laughing in the love experiment?

I see you, You see me

(Where do you live?)

You see me, I see you

(Living in the present)

I see you, You see me and now

《LilyPhilia was a handle name; it was a passionate Lily Chou-Chou site managed by Philia. This passage by Philia was written on the front page》

She was born on December 8th, 1980, at 10:50 PM. The exact time Mark David Chapman killed John Lennon. For me, though, that's just a coincidence. All I care about is that she was born at that exact moment. Her name: Lily Chou-Chou. Genius. Or rather, genesis. The Ether personified.

《Blue Cat and Winter, who met on this site, rapidly became close, which was obvious to everyone else. They were like real lovers. Then one day, the following post was made on the BBS》

《Posted by: Winter》 November 20th (Sat) 00:40
☐ Black Night

Nights spent alone are scary.
 A cat is crying in the distance.
 It's crying with a sad voice.
 For some reason, I was reminded of Blue Cat-san.

Blue Cat-san, how are you?

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 November 20th (Sat) 00:41
☐ Re. Black Night

Outside the window, it's a dark, deep darkness.
 Winter-san, you're looking at the same darkness too, right?

《Posted by: Winter》 November 20th (Sat) 00:42
☐ Under the Black Night Sky

Thank you for replying.
 Under the pitch-black night sky,
 Are we the only ones dwelling on such feelings?
 I hope it's just us.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 November 20th (Sat) 00:43
☐ This kind of love

Don't you think it's okay for love to take this form?

《Posted by: Winter》 November 20th (Sat) 00:44
☐ Blue Cat-san

My fingers tremble as I type "Blue Cat-san."
 Please don't say such heart-fluttering things.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 20th (Sat) 00:45

☐ Winter

Winter

You exist within these characters.

Winter

What painfully sad those characters they are.
Blue Cat is suffering.

《Posted by: Winter》November 20th (Sat) 00:46

☐ Blue Cat-san

Blue Cat-san

Blue Cat-san

Blue Cat-san

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 20th (Sat) 00:47

☐ Winter

W

I

N

T

E

R

《Posted by: Bear》November 20th (Sat) 00:48

☐ Excuse me

Um, you two, I don't know when things turned into this,
but... Wouldn't it be better to handle this kind of thing in
private emails?

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 20th (Sat) 00:52

☐ There's a devil among us!

There's a hacker among us!
Who is it? Show yourself!

《Posted by: Bear》November 20th (Sat) 00:54

☐ A devil?

A hacker? Are you talking about me?
If I made you angry, I apologize.
But "hacker" is too much. Why "hacker"?
I'm leaving for today.

I've disturbed you.
(But, wouldn't it be better to delete these post later?)

《The next day, the above love letter was deleted》

《Posted by: Philia》 November 21st (Sun) 20:40
☐ Deleted

I don't really understand the situation, but there was an inappropriate post, so I deleted it.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 November 21st (Sun) 22:02
☐ Malice

There are people with malice in this group.
I'm going to stop coming here.
Goodbye, everyone.

《Posted by: Pascal》 November 21st (Sun) 22:10
☐ Malice?

I don't really understand what Blue Cat-kun is saying.
What does he mean by malice?
Well, it's up to them to flirt, but all Bear-san did was cough a little...

So, that's malice?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 November 21st (Sun) 22:13
☐ Disgusting

Is it malice to say so?
Disgusting!
This is a page for Lily fans, you know.
If you want to do that kind of thing,
I wish you'd go to a site that caters to that.
Goodbye.
And don't ever come back.

《Posted by: Philia》 November 21st (Sun) 22:25
☐ Everyone!

Everyone, isn't it enough?
Everyone makes mistakes sometimes.
Blue Cat-kun has said he's leaving, so please forgive him.
More than that, shouldn't we bless their future?

《Posted by: Pascal》 November 21st (Sun) 22:28
☐ Blessings!

Blessings to the two of them!

By the way, do those two know each other's faces?
I'm really curious about that.
Oh? Is this just my nosy nature?

《Posted by: Bear》November 21st (Sun) 23:50
☐ I'm sorry

I'm sorry.
It must be my fault.
I did something unnecessary.
Please forgive me, you two.

《Posted by: Winter》November 21st (Sun) 23:56
☐ The source of the malice

The malice that Blue Cat-san is talking about is not about that.
But I don't even feel like explaining it.
What would Lily say?
The source of that malice will surely, surely be judged by God.
Go to hell.

《Posted by: Bear》November 21st (Sun) 23:58
☐ Hell?

Isn't an apology enough? Please forgive me.

《Posted by: Winter》November 22nd (Mon) 00:02
☐ To Bear-san

It's not about you, Bear-san.
It's someone among us.
I don't want to suspect anyone, but it's a fact.
The source of the malice hurt me and hurt Blue Cat-san.
Please don't do it again. I'm leaving this place too.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 00:15
☐ A message to Winter

To those of you completely lost in this world, I shouldn't even say this, but... Enough with the nonsense, just get out.
This is really unpleasant.
Your lover seems to have been gone.
Winter, farewell to you too.

《Posted by: Winter》November 22nd (Mon) 00:23
☐ To Sleepy Head-san

Sleepy Head-san, I knew that you harbored affection for Blue Cat-san and felt bitterness towards me. I also vaguely sensed that you looked down on me as a weak and sentimental person. But that doesn't mean I suspect you. I don't want to suspect anyone. But the fact is, someone did something like that. Whose malice was it, I...

I don't even want to know.
 I'm leaving.
 Thank you everyone for everything until now.
 P.S.
 Ether clouds over in an instant. It's that pure.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 00:31
☐ Please correct it

That I harbored affection for Blue Cat-san? That's going too far. I like the people who gather at this site. I like Blue Cat-san at that level.

The way you say it, it sounds like I had special feelings for Blue Cat-san. I'm not you. In this virtual world of just text, love and romance are ridiculous!
 I want you to correct it, but since she doesn't seem to be coming back, I'll correct it myself.

《Posted by: Bear》November 22nd (Mon) 00:33
☐ Huh?

Could that possibly be someone's prank?
 Is that it?
 Philia-san, can't you see the sender's address over there?

《Posted by: Philia》November 22nd (Mon) 00:35
☐ I'm sorry

I'm sorry.
 I didn't see the post, so I didn't know.
 No... but wait!
 The server address is definitely different from theirs!
 It seems like it was someone's prank after all!
 If so, that's an incredibly malicious prank.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 00:40
☐ Even if it's a prank

Even if that was a prank, I despise the person who did it.
 But don't you think those two were also partly to blame?

Though, even someone as dense as me,
 I kind of felt that their hearts were somehow connected.

I'm sure the culprit was feeling uncomfortable about that couple too. Honestly, I was uncomfortable even before this incident even happened.

《Posted by: Bear》November 22nd (Mon) 00:42
☐ You're not dense

Sleepy Head, you're not dense.
 You were quite perceptive.

《Posted by: Philia》November 22nd (Mon) 01:02

☐ It's clear!

I've tracked down the server address.

202.210.239.170.31.678.66 is the IP address of Infinity Mail Server.

Infinity's free internet connection service. It's something that lets you get as many email addresses as you want for free.

Hmm. With this, I can't identify the culprit.

It's quite malicious. Just who in the world is it?

《Posted by: Pascal》November 22nd (Mon) 01:08

☐ The truth

I hate how this is like a trial, but what exactly is going on?

Winter, Blue Cat, please tell me the truth. If you see this, please answer me. I can't sleep well with things as they are.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 22nd (Mon) 01:10

☐ Re. The truth

We loved each other.

《Posted by: Winter》November 22nd (Mon) 01:12

☐ Re. The truth

That much is true.

《Posted by: Pascal》November 22nd (Mon) 01:15

☐ I'm blushing!

No, it's making me blush...

What I wanted to ask wasn't about that, but whether it was someone's prank. Instead of abstract terms like "devil" or "malice," if it was a prank, I want you to just say it was. I don't know if it's difficult for you two to say. In the end, does that mean that exchange wasn't between the two of you?

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 22nd (Mon) 01:21

☐ The truth

That was our real conversation.

《Posted by: Pascal》November 22nd (Mon) 01:22

☐ What?!

So, it wasn't a prank?

Blue Cat-san, what exactly is going on?

《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 22nd (Mon) 01:23

☐ The truth 2

That was our real conversation.
I caused a great deal of trouble for everyone.

《Posted by: Winter》November 22nd (Mon) 01:26
☐ Blue Cat-san!

I admit that.
But... Blue Cat-san! Is it okay if I tell the truth?
Actually, I know who the culprit is.

《Posted by: Philia》November 22nd (Mon) 01:28
☐ Wait a minute!

Wait a minute!

> 《Posted by: Blue Cat》November 22nd (Mon) 01:10
> ☐ Re. The truth
>
> We loved each other.

The Blue Cat-san after this is a fake.
It's an Infinity free address!

《Posted by: Bear》November 22nd (Mon) 01:30
☐ What do you mean?

What do you mean?
You mean there's a fake?

Was that person the one who wrote the message?
But Winter admitted it, right?
Is Winter also a fake?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 01:32
☐ The real culprit

Who is the real culprit?
Is that the person Blue Cat was talking about when he
mentioned malice?
Winter, what is the truth?
Who is the culprit? Winter, tell us now!

《Posted by: Philia》November 22nd (Mon) 01:35
☐ A message to the culprit

A message to the culprit.
I forbid you from entering this site.
I will delete your posts as soon as I see them.

《Posted by: Bear》November 22nd (Mon) 01:37
☐ Unforgivable

If those two loved each other, I think that's fine.
But I can't forgive the person who trampled on that.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 01:40

☐ I said a bit too much

I said a bit too much earlier.

Please forgive me for thinking it was jealousy.

But the person who is truly unforgivable is that culprit, right? That's why, Winter, you should clearly say the culprit's name.

《Posted by: Winter》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:50

☐ Last message

That's enough.

I'm disappearing from this site.

I probably won't see you all again.

Take care, everyone.

Goodbye.

《Posted by: Bear》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:51

☐ Wait!

Winter, wait!

Don't be so hasty!

《Posted by: Pascal》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:53

☐ Bear-san

Bear-san, isn't that enough?

If you continue any further, you'll only hurt them both, and... ☐ Hey

It will only please the culprit even more than this.
Winter, Blue Cat, take care.

《Posted by: Bear》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:55

☐ I agree

...I agree. One last thing to you two...

I was wrong to interrupt that night.

Ah, was that the culprit's doing?

Hmm. I don't quite get it.

《Posted by: Satie》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:57

☐ Hey, hey

What's going on?

I should have come sooner.

Oops, was that inappropriate? Sorry.

《Posted by: Pascal》 November 22nd (Mon) 01:59

☐ By the way

By the way, what happened to Nevira71 and Ironman 29?

I haven't seen them at all.

《Posted by: Ironman 29》 November 22nd (Mon) 02:02

Hey. Pascal-kun, I'm here! To be honest,
I was a bit freaked out.

Personally, I'm not good with that kind of lovers' quarrel.
Just to let you know, I'm not the culprit.

《Posted by: Pascal》November 22nd (Mon) 02:04

☐ Ironman was here!

Does that mean the culprit is Nevira71?
He seemed to know a lot about computers.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》November 22nd (Mon) 02:06

☐ To Pascal

Hey, Pascal. Isn't it time to stop looking for the culprit?
I want to forget about it already.

《Posted by: Philia》November 22nd (Mon) 02:08

☐ Let's stop

Unless the culprit confesses on their own, this issue won't
be resolved. More than that, it's unbearable for me as the
administrator to see this bulletin board fall apart because
of this.

《The case remains a mystery, and a week has passed》

《Posted by: Blue Cat》December 1st (Wed) 00:40

☐ To everyone

I thought I would never come here again, but I've returned
due to various circumstances. I didn't know that such a thing
had happened after I last posted. It seems that the source of
the malice certainly existed.

Winter and I were exchanging emails.

But for this past week, no matter how many emails I send
her, she doesn't reply, and I'm extremely worried.

The exchange between the two of us posted here is genuine.

However, that was merely something Winter and I
exchanged via email. So why was it posted here?

Probably the culprit hacked either my or her computer.

And then scattered it here.

I can only think of it that way.

Perhaps I should have told you all about this sooner.

You all may have been hacked as well.

Please be careful.

《Posted by: Bear》December 1st (Wed) 00:52

☐ Re. To everyone

I feel an indescribable anger welling up inside me.

I can't forgive this culprit.

If it was someone here who did this, I beg you, please never show your face again.

《Posted by: Nevira71》December 2nd (Thu) 00:59

☐ Long time no see

Hi everyone, it's been a while.

I was on a business trip to Hokkaido for a while, so I couldn't post.

A lot has happened while I was away! I was surprised when I read the past logs. Just who is the culprit? They're truly despicable. By the way, it's not me. I certainly work in programming, but precisely because of that, I consider myself to have a higher moral compass regarding the internet than anyone else. Pascal-kun seems to be suspecting me, but that's defamation. I want an apology.

《Posted by: Nevira71》December 2nd (Thu) 01:05

☐ My deduction

According to my deduction, Pascal-kun is also quite suspicious. He's trying to deflect suspicion from himself.

He didn't want to be suspected, so wasn't he shouting louder than anyone else about who the culprit was?

《Posted by: Pascal》December 2nd (Thu) 01:08

☐ Hey, Nevira71

I apologize for mentioning your name. But I didn't say you were the culprit.

Of course, I'm not the culprit either. This matter is already over for me. Let's not bring it up again.

《Posted by: Nevira71》December 2nd (Thu) 01:10

☐ For Pascal-kun's sake

Let's do that. For Pascal-kun, who is full of suspicion, too, you know.

《Posted by: Pascal》December 2nd (Thu) 01:15

☐ Oh come on

Easy for you to say.

Welcome back from your business trip to Hokkaido.

It's the first time I've heard that there are no computers in Hokkaido, though.

Besides, didn't you say recently that you bought an iBook?

《Posted by: Bear》December 4th (Sat) 00:32

☐ To everyone

Since then, this page has completely lost its energy, and the number of posts has drastically decreased.

By the way, there's a live show at Quatre this month.
So I'm thinking of having an offline gathering.
Wouldn't you all like to meet once?
It's kind of stifling to only interact in this world of text.

Those who are interested in this proposal, please reply!

《Posted by: Ironman 29》December 4th (Sat) 00:37

☐ Re. To everyone

That sounds good.
I'm definitely in!
If we're going to do it, we need some kind of identifier, huh?

《Posted by: Bear》December 4th (Sat) 00:40

☐ Heading to Quatre

Just so you know, I'm really skinny and not "Bear" at all.
Sorry for acting tough.
By the way, as for an identifier, how about a Lily Chou-Chou CD?

《Posted by: Pascal》December 4th (Sat) 00:44

☐ Re. Heading to Quatre

I also agree!

But with a Lily Chou-Chou CD, you won't know who's who, will you?

Others might have it too, you never know.

Isn't there something easier to recognize?

Like a rose? That's a bit uncool, huh?

How about writing "Lily" on your forehead?

《Posted by: Philia》December 4th (Sat) 00:48

☐ Proposal!

I think Bear-san's plan is interesting.

But I think there are still some people who don't want to show their faces. So, here's a proposal!

Everyone decides on their own identifier beforehand.

Those who don't want to show their faces don't have to wear an identifier. The rule at Quatre is not to call out to each other. That's all for that day. Then we talk about what happened that day later in this thread?

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》December 4th (Sat) 00:50

☐ I agree

I agree with Philia's idea.

I don't want to show my face. I'm not confident.

I won't wear anything, but I'll observe everyone.

《Posted by: Pascal》December 4th (Sat) 00:53

☐ OK

Let's do that.

Now that it's actually happening, I'm getting a little nervous. I'll be wearing red gloves. I'll have the middle finger cut out, so look for that.

《Posted by: Philia》December 4th (Sat) 00:55

☐ Actually...

I'll be wearing a T-shirt with the site's logo.
I secretly made them.

《Posted by: Bear》December 4th (Sat) 00:57

☐ I'm...

I want that T-shirt! > Philia
I'll be carrying a bear plushie.

《Posted by: Satie》December 4th (Sat) 00:59

☐ I'm yellow!

I'll be wearing yellow sunglasses and a yellow varsity jacket.
You should be able to spot me!

《Posted by: Ironman 29》December 4th (Sat) 01:03

☐ Find 29!

Please look for the number 29.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》December 4th (Sat) 01:08

☐ I'm going too

I'm going too.

I'll bring a green apple.

《Posted by: Nevira71》December 4th (Sat) 01:09

☐ Oh dear

Unfortunately, I have a business trip to Okinawa that day.
Lucky you, students. Have fun, everyone.

《And then, on the day of the live show》

《Posted by: Philia》December 8th (Wed) 23:40

☐ Lily descends!

Lily descends upon the Quatre.
Tonight is the best night!

《このメッセージを最後にホームページ「リリフィリア」は消滅した》

《After this final message, the website "Lilyphilia" was gone.》

<http://www.angel-sakurai.com/philia-bbs/>

を仕掛けたパスカルの真意は? What was Pascal's real intention in setting this up?

物語はいよいよ佳境へ! The story is finally reaching its climax!

第
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Chapter 5: Rumble Fish



コップの中で
魚が踊っている
ピアノにあわせて
くるくる回る
おかしくて
思わず微笑んだ

コップの中で
二匹の魚が踊る
愛し合っている
かわいくて
思わず微笑んだ

あなたの口から
別れ話がこぼれる
あたしは黙って
魚を見ていた
ただ笑っていた
こっち見ろよ
話きけよ
泣いてるのか？
なんだ 笑ってやがる
何がおかしい
この魚？
愛し合っているって？
バカ、ランブルフィッシュだよ
殺し合ってるのさ

魚は相手の鰭を食いちぎり、
嬉しそうに
ひととき大きく跳ねてみせた

そしてまた
あなたの口から
果てしない
別れ話があふれだす

Inside the glass
a fish is dancing
to the piano's tune,
spinning around and around.
It was funny,
and I smiled without thinking.
Inside the glass
two fish are dancing.
They seem to be in love.
They're so cute,
and I smiled without thinking.

From your mouth
words of breaking up spill out.
I stayed silent
watching the fish
just smiling.

Look at me!
Listen to what I'm saying!
Are you crying?
What? You're laughing?
What's so funny?
These fish?
You think they're in love?
Idiot, they're Rumble Fish!
They're killing each other.
The fish bit off the other's fin,
and, seemingly delighted,
jumped even higher than before.

And then again
from your mouth
endless
words of breaking up poured out.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 6th (Sat) 20:04

☐ To Pascal

I saw the website. I'm shocked, but I can't explain why.
I couldn't help but read it from Winter's point of view.
Poor Winter.
I think Winter really loved Blue Cat.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 20:18

☐ To Pascal

I read the website too. Wow. I'm speechless. I'm mad about the hacking, that's awful.
But Blue Cat and Winter's strange love story was also touching. If love can grow from posting online, humans have made something amazing. The internet didn't even exist a few decades ago.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 6th (Sat) 20:21

☐ It's painful

It's just painful. So painful.
Is Winter doing okay?

《Posted by: Dream Child》 May 6th (Sat) 20:25

☐ Signal of Love

A signal of love from Blue Cat to Winter.
From Winter to Blue Cat.
Someone got in the way.
Evil Ether.
May Ether judge that person.

《Posted by: Passerby》 May 6th (Sat) 23:43

☐ Just a Passerby

I'm just passing by, but I heard the Freemasons were involved in the Quatre incident. Rumor is that Hoshino, who died, had secret information. Does anyone know anything?

《Posted by: Dalmatian》 May 6th (Sat) 23:50

☐ Nice to meet you

I heard there was a detective thing going on here about the Quatre incident, so I checked it out. Someone on this site is the culprit, right?

Is the culprit going to hide until they're found out here?
I'll be watching to see what happens.

《Posted by: Bodhisattva》 May 6th (Sat) 23:54

☐ An acquaintance of mine

An acquaintance of mine is hooked on a new religious group called Mansho Mange Shinra Manzai Kai (it has a really long, complicated name). He said he saw Lily Chou-Chou going there. He says that the "Ether" that Lily talks about is quoted from the words of the group's leader, Mr. Shinra Manzai. Recently, the number of newcomers has been increasing. I'm starting to feel a little nervous.

《Posted by: Bodhisattva》 May 6th (Sat) 23:57

☐ If you're interested

I asked a friend, and it seems there's Mansho Mange Shinra Manzai Kai's website. If you're interested, please take a look.

www.manmankai.com

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 6th (Sat) 23:59

☐ To Pascal

Isn't Nevira71 completely suspicious?

He has no alibi.

It's gotta be him, right?

No, I'm not saying this because I was harassed by him.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 8th (Mon) 20:39

☐ To Everyone

Recently, the number of new people has been increasing. I feel like it's getting a bit dangerous.

Honestly, I'm getting a little scared. Everyone, please don't treat this as just entertainment. The reason I forgave Pascal-kun was because there was a possibility that our friend had died. This is not a joking matter.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 20:54

☐ Sorry for being late.

Sorry for being late. I took a day off to see where Satie stood on this. I'm honestly surprised by all the posts.

I want to thank Satie for not deleting my weird, cryptic posts, and I'll write a little more about what happened back then.

The truth is, I saw it.

I saw one guy stab another guy.

It was after someone yelled Lily's name, everything was chaotic, total panic. While we were being pushed, the guy next to me looked at me. I had on red gloves, the ones with the middle finger cut off. That was my marker.

He noticed them. That's why he looked at me.

He was holding a green apple. Which means he was Blue Cat. The rule at the concert was that we wouldn't talk, so we just made eye contact.

It was just a glance. There were so many people around. We were quickly separated as if being swept away by the crowd. Blue Cat-kun looked back at me many times. I saw something shining around his back. A butterfly knife. Someone stabbed Blue Cat-kun in the back with it. Stabbed him two or three times. However, Blue Cat-kun didn't seem to notice. He walked on as normally as if he thought it was nothing. The perpetrator pushed through the crowd and came towards me. I saw his face. I still remember it clearly.

When I looked towards Blue Cat-kun, he was gone. He must have collapsed. When I looked back again, the man who stabbed him was also gone. It was a huge panic, anyway. After a while, I heard screams from where Blue Cat-kun probably fell. "He's dead!" "There's so much blood!" "Someone call an ambulance!" people were shouting.

And then, I realized I was screaming like a madman.

"It's him! He stabbed him!"

I said that and pointed into the distance, but I didn't know if he really went that way. I just had to shout something, point somewhere, or the perpetrator would escape. I was desperate. But the area was already in chaos, and no one could hear my voice. Soon, people surged in like a wave, and the child standing in front of me tripped. Several people stepped on the child's body. I panicked and bent down to try to help the child up.

And then I fell down too. Many feet stepped on my face and body.

When I looked up, I could see a girl's panties. It's inappropriate, but it's true. She was straddling my face. Her high heels were repeatedly stepping on my shoulders and face. Each time, she'd say in a small voice, "Sorry," but then another wave of people would come and she'd be swept away.

What am I talking about? Anyway, that's what I remember. I remember things that don't make sense. I might have died. I only thought that when I saw the news at the hospital that Hoshino-san had passed away. I didn't understand anything then. I just remember everyone looking down at my face. I only remember their eyes. It was the same look I saw when I was a lost child crying loudly, and passersby and adults looked down at me with stern faces. I was at my wit's end. Back then, I was just a helpless lost child.

Well, enough about me.

The question is, who was the culprit?

At least it's someone who saw that post. Someone who knew Blue Cat-kun had a green apple. And someone who was hacking Blue Cat-kun's and others' correspondence.

《Posted by: TomTom》May 8th (Mon) 20:57

☐ Suspicion

He's getting shadier and shadier. It has to be him, right?

《Posted by: Pascal》May 8th (Mon) 21:47

□ The Culprit's Profile

TomTom-san's reasoning is also understandable. Certainly, he has no alibi, and there's something in his nature that makes him capable of such things. However, let's not rush and try to organize things once. First, the motive. Who would hate Blue Cat-kun enough to do this? It was probably someone who had a crush on Winter.

Now, we can rule out Sleepy Head.

Sleepy Head-san was indeed jealous of Winter. However, from my feeling of being involved in that bulletin board, I think she wasn't that into Blue Cat-kun. Rather, it should be interpreted that she was just jealous of the two of them flirting. Sleepy Head-san was the heroine there until Winter appeared. Well, her not acting like a heroine was nice, but she is also a woman. I think the correct interpretation is that she got a little irritated by Winter's appearance. But it's not a strong enough reason to be a sufficient motive.

So, the remaining are Satie, Philia, Nevira71 (Ironman 29), Bear, and myself, Pascal. All of them are men, so there's an equal possibility that any of us could have been secretly in love with Winter. Well, among them, the shadiest one, as TomTom-san pointed out, is Nevira71, because he keeps changing his handle name.

But unfortunately, we have seen Ironman 29's appearance. We witnessed someone with the number "29" stuck to the knee of their jeans. Moreover, that person had a different face from the culprit I saw. Unfortunately, TomTom-san's reasoning is wrong. The culprit is neither Ironman 29 nor Nevira71.

Speaking of seeing someone, I saw Bear. Bear and Sleepy Head also saw me.

Seeing someone means that person had their own identifying mark. If they intended to kill Blue Cat-kun, it's obvious they wouldn't wear an identifying mark. Those who didn't wear an identifying mark, including those who didn't come at all, are limited to Satie and Philia.

I'm sorry, Satie, but I did consider the possibility of you being the culprit. There's nothing to disprove this.

However, unfortunately, this narrows down the culprit to core regulars. If we include those who just lurk or those who occasionally show up, we can't tell who the culprit is. My deduction no longer holds.

For all we know, Satie and Philia just happened to be unable to come that day. That's all it might be. Yet, to conclude they're the culprit based on that alone is too hasty. Just because they weren't at the live concert doesn't automatically make them guilty. That's too simple.

There must be others with more suspicious elements. Considering that, it's probably Philia after all.

The fact that he closed his website right after that day is really weird. And that's not all. The meetup was Bear's idea, but the idea of everyone wearing identifying marks was Philia's. Basically, with that one idea, he could make Blue Cat-kun wear an identifying mark while also hiding his own identity by not wearing one.

So, that's how I came to the conclusion that Philia is the culprit. It makes the most sense that Philia stabbed Blue Cat-kun and then went into hiding. At least, since that incident, only Philia and Blue Cat-kun have disappeared.

《Posted by: Sleepy Head》 May 8th (Mon) 21:54

☐ A Little Correction!

I'd like to correct something in Pascal's post. There was a comment about me being irritated because I lost my "heroine" position, but that's not the case at all. It's true that I disliked Winter. She acted like she was so pitiful and wanted everyone to help her, always saying things to get attention, which I hated.

Of course, I'm not the culprit. Just to be clear.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 8th (Mon) 22:05

☐ Question

Is there a chance that Ironman 29, who showed up at Quatre, was just a decoy?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 22:12

☐ >TomTom

It's possible, I guess. But I think he's just someone who likes to cause trouble.

That guy isn't the type of person to kill someone. That's what I think. Sure, he might seem strange, but I don't think he'd actually kill someone. If you only think about the hacking, he seems pretty shady, but I don't know if he'd go as far as committing murder.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 8th (Mon) 22:15

☐ Assuming it's Philia

But if Philia is the culprit, what's his motive?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 22:17

☐ >Satie

The only motive I can think of is that he was in love with Winter.

To summarize once again, here's what I think happened: Philia was actually in love with Winter.

Philia was the most likely to know Winter and Blue Cat's email addresses. (He could have gotten them from emails sent to the website.) Philia is the one who suggested that we wear identifying marks at the meetup. Philia didn't show up. (In other words, he was wearing a mask.) And then, he suddenly disappeared after that day.

What do you think?

If there's anything wrong, let me know.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 8th (Mon) 22:20

☐ To Pascal

Would someone really kill another person for that reason?
I mean, online forums are a world where you can't see each other's faces. Even if you fall in love online, it's still just virtual, and everyone is putting on an act (lol).

《Posted by: Luka》 May 8th (Mon) 22:21

☐ Objection!

It's possible!

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 8th (Mon) 22:22

☐ Huh?

...Is that so?

《Posted by: Luka》 May 8th (Mon) 22:23

☐ TomTom-san!

Of course it is!

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 22:25

☐ Virtual Love

I don't know about that...

However, as Luka-san said, there might be people who can't tell the difference between the virtual world and reality.

《Posted by: Luka》 May 8th (Mon) 22:26

☐ Re: Virtual Love

That hurt my feelings.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 22:28

☐ Re:Re: Virtual Love

I wasn't talking about you.

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 8th (Mon) 22:51

☐ Though it may be late...

I just finished reading through everything. By the way, if the missing people are Philia-san and Blue Cat-san, couldn't it be the other way around? In other words, is there a possibility that Philia-san was killed and Blue Cat-san is the culprit?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 8th (Mon) 22:59

☐ Re: Though it may be late...

I don't think so.

I want you to remember one more time.
Philia closed the last Lilyphilia like this.

>《Posted by: Philia》December 8th (Wed) 23:40
 >□ Lily descends!
 >Lily descends upon the Quatre.
 >Tonight is the best night!

This date and time.
 Isn't this the best proof that Philia was alive after that incident?

<http://www.angel-sakurai.com/philia-bbs/>

《Posted by: Blue Cat》May 8th (Mon) 23:54
 □ It's Blue Cat

Everyone, I'm sorry for causing a commotion.
 And to everyone from the Lilyphilia site, it's been a while.
 It's Blue Cat.
 I'm alive.
 Please don't kill me off on your own.

I'm saying this because there's a mistake in Pascal-san's reasoning. That day, someone called out to me.
 He said to me, "Are you Blue Cat-kun?"
 When I nodded, he pulled up the black sweater he was wearing. Underneath, he was wearing a T-shirt.
 On his chest were the words "Lilyphilia."

I recognized him by that T-shirt.
 It was Philia.

"Give me that apple. I want it as a souvenir from the forum."
 Philia said.

I gave him the apple.
 So, if the victim had the apple, that person is Philia.

《Posted by: Pascal》May 8th (Mon) 23:59
 □ Blue Cat-kun!

You were alive! Why didn't you come out sooner?
 Now I look like a fool.
 But if you're alive and Philia was stabbed, then who stabbed him?
 ...If it's come to this, the only one left is Satie, but... really...?

《Posted by: Blue Cat》May 9th (Tue) 00:05
 □ It's Blue Cat

Satie-san has nothing to do with it.
 I know the real culprit.

《Posted by: Bear》May 9th (Tue) 00:05
 □ Blue Cat-kun!

Blue Cat-kun! You were alive?
First of all, I'm relieved.
But, if your story is true, doesn't that mean the culprit
mistook Philia for you and killed him?

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 9th (Tue) 00:07
☐ !!

You know the real culprit?! Seriously?!

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 May 9th (Tue) 00:07
☐ The culprit's intention

The culprit's intention was to kill Philia.
That's because I was the one who stabbed Philia.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 9th (Tue) 00:07
☐ Blue Cat-kun!

Whoa. My posts are getting mixed up, but another shocking
statement! What?! You know the real culprit? Blue Cat-kun,
who is it?!

《Posted by: Bear》 May 9th (Tue) 00:08
☐ Eeeeeek!!

You're the culprit?! > Blue Cat-kun

《Posted by: Satie》 May 9th (Tue) 00:11
☐ As the administrator

Blue Cat-kun, it's been a while. I'd like to say it's good to see
you're doing well... but it seems like that's not the case.
As the administrator, I can't allow this conversation to
continue here any longer. Blue Cat-kun, and Pascal-kun too,
would you mind moving this discussion to email?
Let's keep the jokes there.

《Posted by: TomTom》 May 9th (Tue) 00:12
☐ As a participant

As a participant, I want to hear more!
So, let's do this. From now on, let's treat everything as
fiction. (But wasn't he really the culprit? That's a bit of a
bummer!)

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 May 9th (Tue) 00:25
☐ It's Blue Cat

I'm sorry, Satie-san, but I want everyone to hear this. It's
okay if you think of it as fiction. First, I sincerely apologize
to Philia-san's family. When Philia called out to me at
Quatre that day, I never imagined he was the hacker.

I've done something truly irreversible.

I'll try to recreate the conversation from that time as best as I can remember. First, he tapped me on the shoulder.

"Are you Blue Cat-kun?"

"Yes."

Then he pulled up his sweater.

"Philia-san?"

"That's right! Nice to meet you."

"Oh, hi!"

"There's something I need to apologize to you for. Actually, I'm the one who made those emails public."

"Huh?"

"I was a bit jealous, you know. I never thought it would turn into something like this. I'm really sorry."

"Will you forgive me?"

"Here, take this."

Philia gave me a T-shirt.

"Will you forgive me?"

"...Yes."

"Then, as a sign of our reconciliation, will you give me that apple?"

"Huh? This apple?"

"Yeah. I want it as a souvenir from the forum."

I gave Philia the apple.

"Of course, I can't write about the hacking on the forum.

If possible, could you please keep quiet about it too?"

Philia said that and bowed his head to me.

I reluctantly agreed.

But after I parted ways with him, I followed him.

For some reason, I suddenly felt like I couldn't forgive him.

Maybe I couldn't forgive him for being so lighthearted.

No, in the end, I couldn't forgive him for what he did.

But if it weren't for the chaos that day, that would have been the end of it.

Someone shouted, "It's Lily!"

The surroundings became noisy.

In front of my eyes was Philia holding a green apple.

To be honest, I don't remember what happened after that very well. When I came to my senses, I had jumped out from the crowd and was walking alone on Center Street. I thought about throwing away the knife on the way, but I brought it back with me because I thought it would be troublesome if it became evidence.

The next day, I threw the knife away in a nearby rice paddy.

I believe I have done something terrible.

Now I'm lost.

Should I turn myself in?

《Posted by: Angelica》 May 9th (Tue) 00:30

☐ A sad incident

I think this is a very sad incident. There's probably nothing someone inexperienced like me can say to Blue Cat-san, who has committed a crime. But I sincerely hope that he will turn himself in.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 May 9th (Tue) 00:32

☐ I'm sorry

I'm so sorry. I've caused trouble for Satie-san and everyone else.

And I sincerely thank Pascal-san for giving me the opportunity to confess.

《Posted by: Blue Cat》 May 9th (Tue) 00:34

☐ Continued

I will turn myself in tomorrow.

《Posted by: Bodhisattva》 May 9th (Tue) 02:06

☐ An acquaintance of mine

To Blue Cat-san.

In truth, a person's sins cannot be judged by others. I have an acquaintance who is deeply involved in a new religious group called the "Mansho Mange Shinra Manzai Kai."

How about consulting with Mr. Shinra Manzai, the leader of this religion?

物語は最終局面。

The story enters its final stage.

トリックを見破れ、探偵パスカール！

Can you uncover the trick, Detective Pascal!

第
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Chapter 6:
Wings That Cannot Fly



校庭が歪んで見えた
白い体操着が見えた
カラスが低く空
飛んだ
黒い羽を
少しだけ分けてください
空に伸びた階段
そこまで手が届かない

夕暮れの空はあかく
みんなの視線 冷たく
そして大きな石が
空から落ちてきて
あたしを押しつぶす

私の心には見えた
取り残されていくものが
あなたの言いわけや嘘は
何の役にも立たない
がらくたのよう
空に伸びた階段
そこまで手が届かない

夕暮れの空はあかく
みんなの視線 冷たく
そして大きな雲が
空から降りてきて
あたしを隠していく

機嫌直して生きよう
空のきれまからこぼれる
光がまた動いてくるよ

夕暮れの空はあかく
もうすぐに暮れてしまう
だから飛べない翼を
捨てたら 捨てたなら
あたしは舞い上がろう

だから飛べない翼を
捨てたら 捨てたなら
あたしは舞い上がろう

The schoolyard looked distorted
I saw white gym clothes
A crow flew low
In the sky
Please share
A little of your black feathers
Stairs reaching for the sky
My hand can't reach that far
The twilight sky is red
Everyone's gaze is cold
And a large stone
Falls from the sky
And crushes me
My heart could see
Things being left behind
Your excuses and lies
Are useless
Like junk
Stairs reaching for the sky
My hand can't reach that far
The twilight sky is red
Everyone's gaze is cold
And a large cloud
Descends from the sky
And hides me
Let's fix our moods and live
The light spilling from the gaps in the sky
Starts moving again
The twilight sky is red
If I throw them away, if I throw them away
I will soar
It will be dark soon
So these wings that cannot fly
So these wings that cannot fly
If I throw them away, if I throw them away
I will soar

《Posted by: Pascal》May 13th (Sat) 19:59

☐ Praying for Philia's happiness in the afterlife

Blue Cat said he would turn himself in,
but I haven't seen any news about it.
Did he really turn himself in?
By the way, I received an email from Winter-san.
She said she also sent it to Blue Cat, but he didn't reply.
I got her permission, so I'll forward it to Satie.

《Posted by: Satie》May 13th (Sat) 20:07

☐ Re: Praying for Philia's happiness in the afterlife

I received Winter-san's email.
She seems to be quite shocked, and it pained me to read it.

《Posted by: Pascal》May 13th (Sat) 20:11

☐ Winter-san's Letter

I think it's about time to end this topic.
I'm sure everyone is tired of it.
I feel Winter-san's pain.
But as Winter-san said, this is the cyber world.
It's a world where no one knows who is alive and who is dead.
Is Philia really dead?
Is Blue Cat really alive?

No one knows that.
Blue Cat said he stabbed Philia.
But in the end, we can't even determine who typed Blue Cat's posts.
Do you understand what I mean?
Well, let's close the curtain on this topic. From tomorrow, let's return to the world of ether.

By the way, Satie. Since I got permission from Winter-san, could you post her entire email?

《Posted by: Satie》May 13th (Sat) 20:18

☐ Re: Winter-san's Letter

I don't see any problem, so I'll post it.

>>>>

Pascal-san, how are you?
I saw what happened on the forum.
If Blue Cat-san really did that,
I feel like I also bear some responsibility.
Since the incident with that email, I've been afraid of the internet and haven't even been able to turn on my computer.
So, I haven't had a chance to open the email I received from Blue Cat-san since then.

It was strangely empty to think that cutting off relationships with people on the website was that easy.
 I couldn't listen to Lily's songs for a while.
 I bought "Breathing," but I haven't opened it yet.
 I turned on my computer again after the Quatre incident. It was a strange curiosity. I wanted to know what was written on the site. However, the site was down.
 I had a strange feeling.
 I wondered if maybe Philia-san wasn't the one who was killed.
 To be honest, I remember thinking that.

I also checked my mailbox.
 Then I found that Blue Cat-san had been sending me emails every day.
 Eighty-seven in total.
 Every day since I left my "suicide note" and disappeared.
 Sometimes there were several emails in a single day.
 And the last email was on December 8th, 10:14 AM.

"I'm going to Lily's live concert now.
 I'm standing outside with a green apple."

That's what it said. In some of the previous emails, there was an explanation about the offline meeting on the site, and I learned the reason for the green apple.

It's been five months since then. I haven't received a single email from him.
 There was so little contact that I even thought he might have been the one who was killed. To be honest, I thought so.
 As Pascal-san's reasoning progressed in that direction, I felt like my heart was going to burst. But finally, Blue Cat-san's words reached me, and I was relieved to know that he was alive. I'm sorry for Philia-san, but I was honestly relieved.

He was alive. Thank goodness.
 I still haven't been able to contact Blue Cat-san.
 But I've decided that it's enough for me just to know he's alive.
 Pascal-san, thank you so much.
 As Blue Cat-san said,
 I thank you for giving him that opportunity.

Winter

>>>>

That was the full text of Winter-san's email.
 But what happened to Blue Cat-kun? I wonder if he committed suicide or something.
 Blue Cat-kun, if you're reading this, don't think about doing anything rash. In this case, I think you should turn yourself in.

《Posted by: Curse》May 13th (Sat) 20:19

☐ Curse

It's a curse.

It's the curse of Lily Chou-Chou. You guys are sniffing too much ether.

《Posted by: Last Name Anonymous, First Name Hope》

May 13th (Sat) 20:30

☐ Blue Cat-san

I think I saw Blue Cat-san at Quatre too. You were the one with the apple, right? You were there. I think you were with a friend. I wonder if that friend was Philia. But if that's the case, was Philia a middle school student?

《Posted by: Eric Plankton》 May 13th (Sat) 20:31

☐ Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you. I came here because I wanted to recruit band members, but it seems like something terrible has happened.

《Posted by: Bear》 May 13th (Sat) 20:31

☐ Offline meeting

Should we have an offline meeting? This time, in a proper way. I want to see everyone's real faces.

《Posted by: Amika》 May 13th (Sat) 20:32

☐ Ether

I'm listening to Lily's songs obsessively.

Oh, God of Ether, please save the lost Blue Cat-san!

I beg you!

《Posted by: Nevira71》 May 13th (Sat) 21:08

☐ Farewell

This is my last post. I'm leaving this place for good. But before I go, I'm gonna spill everything I know. Blue Cat said that Philia apologized for hacking him, but that's a total lie. Philia would never say something like that. Because I'm the one who hacked into Blue Cat's computer.

The reason I'm writing this is because I want you all to know I didn't kill anyone.

I hated Blue Cat. That's why I hacked his computer, stole his personal info, and posted it all over the message board. I was stunned when I found that email. A love letter. I just couldn't deal with it.

I sent Blue Cat a ton of hateful emails. Like, a crazy amount of messages saying "Die." He deserved it.

But he was shameless enough to come back to the message board. Guess he didn't get my warning.

So I figured out a way to hurt him even worse. That was posting those emails publicly. The only thing I didn't think about was that it wouldn't just hurt Blue Cat...

As a result, I ended up deeply hurting Winter-san as well.

But everyone, please understand. I was that jealous of Blue Cat. Because I truly loved Winter-san. I might be laughed at, but I was serious. I had never loved a woman that much before. Before that, reality was just fiction to me. Compared to Winter-san's reality, real women were nothing more than low-resolution image data, less than 4-bit.

My handle name in this fictional world is Tetsuya Kosaka.

I'm 28 years old. I work as a computer programmer.
I've loved anime since I was a student.

My favorites are "Kiki's Delivery Service" and "Castle in the Sky." I don't understand real girls. I've liked real girls before. But they were, for example, a girl I saw on the Sobu Line, or a girl at my favorite video store. Of course, I never talked to them. I have followed them home before. I'm not a stalker. I've never harmed or scared them. To me, they were no different from images playing on a video. I couldn't touch them, and I couldn't talk to them. But I didn't even have that desire. So I was perfectly content with that. If you want to call me a pervert, that's fine. But there's no safer pervert than me. Even if I dated someone, we'd just end up hurting each other. In fact, that's what happened to Winter-san.

...I hurt Winter-san. Reality is such a troublesome thing.

Why do we hurt people? Or conversely, why can't we hurt anime characters? The mechanism behind this isn't that complicated. To explain, I'll record an episode that happened between me and Miyazaki-san.

In the first place, Miyazaki-san was the one at fault. He was so fixated on Lady Eboshi that he shortened San's screen time. That's no good. He should have shown her more. I didn't even want to see Jiko-bos face. We didn't need Jiko-bo. But the Tatara scenes were good. I liked seeing the women's chests exposed. But I wanted more close-ups. Did Ashitaka even need to be a man? Ashitaka should have been Princess Mononoke. The name Ashitaka is also no good. How about Atashika (Hot Deer, written as 熱鹿), after Nausicaa? Atashika, a Princess Mononoke possessed by spirits. Atashika, a female swordsman. The voice actress should of course be Sumi Shimamoto. In the mountains of the gods, Atashika meets another Princess Mononoke, San (Yuriko Ishida was good!). In the majestic forest of the gods, the two fall into an ultimate love. Miyazaki-san's first lesbian romance. Then Lady Eboshi would also come into play. A forbidden love triangle. Eboshi hates their relationship and ultimately kills the Forest Spirit. This triangular relationship is of course an homage to Hans Christian Andersen and Lev Atamanov. Namely, The Snow Queen. The decapitated Forest Spirit transformed into the Daidarabotchi, but it really should have been Amaterasu Omikami. Clothing like a feathered robe,

Though she wears it, its transparent, so you can see right through. The giant naked god Amaterasu Omikami. She is the mother of Atashika, and the mother of San. In other words, Atashika and San are sisters, and unknowingly, they've fallen into the hell of incest. When Atashika learns this, she agonizes over her original sin and, in desperation, pierces Sans chest. Sister killing (an homage to the Bible/Cain and Abel). Then she blinds herself and embarks on a journey of wandering (an homage to Greek tragedy/Oedipus).

This is a masterpiece! So I wrote a letter to Miyazaki-san. Why didnt he make the story like this? Miyazaki-san must have been hurt. If he had known before creating it, he could have fixed it. But now that its finished, its difficult to correct it (it seems that correcting a movie later is quite troublesome). Miyazaki-san must have been shocked. He must have been greatly hurt. This is how I ended up hurting Miyazaki-san. I didnt intend to, but I ended up hurting him. But San wont be hurt. No one can hurt San. She wont be hurt unless the film is scratched. Even if the film is scratched, San might suffer external damage to the emulsion surface, but Sans own heart wont be hurt. Its Miyazaki-san, the creator, who will be hurt, not San. This is the mechanism of the mental structure of anime characters, and it provides us with an environment where we can safely love and cherish them.

Miyazaki-san, thank you very much.

If only Miyazaki-san is hurt, then San, Nausicaa, Kiki, Clarisse, Lana and

everyone else can live unharmed in the eternal ether.

However, Winter-san, who lives in the real world, was hurt. I hurt her. What kind of era is this, where the 01010101 of a computer hurt people! I wont love anyone anymore. Ill just wait for Miyazaki-sans new work for the rest of my life.

Miyazaki-san, please make a new work soon.

The title is already decided. Totoro-ta of the Wind Castle. Its a love story between Princess Totoro-ta and her beautiful bodyguard, Lily. An homage to The Rose of Versailles and Princess Knight. Im writing a proposal now. When its finished, I plan to send it to Studio Ghibli. Please dont forget about this, everyone.

Totoro-ta of the Wind Castle.

It will surely become a film that goes down in history. And it will be the moment when my handle name Kosaka Tetsuya in my fiction engraves its name in history.

I apologize for hacking. Winter-san, Im truly sorry. I wont forget Winter-san. Please dont forget me either.

Goodbye, everyone.

P.S.

What kind of girl was Winter-san?

In my mind, she was Sheeta Toel Ul Laputa.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 13th (Sat) 21:43

☐ Nevira's Confession

I persuaded Nevira71 to write that confession. The story has gone off in a completely different direction, but that was Nevira71's last message.

Please be kind to him.

By the way, according to his testimony, the hacker wasn't Philia. So, we're back to square one.

In that case, what was Blue Cat's testimony about? Why did he lie, even going so far as to say he would turn himself in? Is Blue Cat really the culprit?

Blue Cat, if you're reading this, please reply.

If you don't want to write here, you can email me directly. ...But I guess there probably won't be a reply.

That is, if my reasoning is correct.

By the way, Satie, there's one thing I find strange.

Why did the email I sent the other day, Winter-san's email, reach you? I sent that email to Philia's email address.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 13th (Sat) 21:48

☐ Conclusion

The one who died is Blue Cat.

Philia is alive.

Under the name of Satie.

If my reasoning is correct,

Satie, you are the culprit.

You wrote Blue Cat's confession, and you killed Blue Cat.

That's the only possibility left.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 13th (Sat) 22:00

☐ Reply

Thank you, Pascal.

Perhaps, I was waiting for someone to figure it out.

《Posted by: Pascal》 May 13th (Sat) 22:01

☐ Why?

Why?

I don't understand the motive at all!

《Posted by: Satie》 May 13th (Sat) 22:02

☐ To everyone

You only know the me within the site. And the same goes for what you know about Blue Cat.

本当の物語はここからがプロローグ。

犯人みずからが語る、

「リリイ・シュシュのすべて」

そして

「フィリアのすべて」

The real story begins here, as a prologue.

The culprit himself speaks,

"All About Lily Chou-Chou"

And

"All About Philia"

第
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Chapter 7:
Resonance (Empty Stone)



長い道は 曲がって ここへ来てる
その先にも続く
時だけが 静かに刻んだ

大人になりかけて やめてしまった
心の内側で
何枚もの 鏡を見つけた

あなたに会う喜び あなたに会う切なさより苦しいのは
まだ私の心の中に 空虚な石が潜むから

生きていくためだけに 生まれてきた
他に意味があるの
それが何か 愛という言葉か

道の端で破れたポスターに書かれてる言葉に目をやる
「愛はここに 神はあなたの中に」そこで途切れてる

宇宙の先、魂の果てで

この肉体の中から 響きが生まれて あなたに辿り着いて
共鳴する 言葉の意味を超えてひろがる
あなたに会う喜び あなたに会う切なさより苦しいのは
まだ私の心の中に 空虚な石が潜むから

The long road twists and turns to get here
It continues on ahead
Only time has quietly carved its mark

I almost became an adult, but then I stopped
Inside my heart
I found many mirrors

The joy of meeting you, the pain of meeting you, more painful than these is
The empty stone that still lurks within my heart

Born only to live, born only for that
Is there another meaning
What is it? Is it the word "love"?

My eyes fall on the words written on a torn poster at the edge of the road
"Love is here. God is within you." It ends there

At the edge of the universe, at the end of the soul

A resonance is born from within this body, reaching you
And echoing, spreading beyond the meaning of words
The joy of meeting you, the pain of meeting you, more painful than these is
The empty stone that still lurks within my heart

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 00:56

☐ The Name "Lily"

Do you know that an important clue about Lily is hidden in "Arabesque"?

The first track of "Breathing," "Arabesque."

Speaking of "Arabesque," Debussy's "Arabesque" is famous.

It's not a strange story for Lily fans.

It's very famous that Lily admires Debussy.

"The person who first turned ether into music"

Lily said that and mentioned the names of Debussy and Erik Satie. For those who don't know, my handle name comes from this.

Well, Debussy had a wife.

Her name was Rosalie Texier.

Her nickname was "Lily."

And the nickname of the daughter, Claude-Emma, born between him and his second wife was "Chou-Chou."

Lily Chou-Chou was created by combining these two names. I wonder why.

If you know her background, you'll understand.

By connecting these two names, Lily tried to restore her past.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:13

☐ "OTO-JIRO"

In a long interview in the February 1998 issue of "OTO-JIRO," Lily talked about her childhood.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:16

☐ Past

Because of her music-loving parents, she spent her childhood playing the piano until her fingers were sore. Other than that, she reminisces that it was a peaceful home. However, that didn't last long. Her father and mother divorced when Lily Chou-Chou was five years old. Lily moved from the capital to the countryside with her mother and the piano to live there.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:18

☐ Noto

Her mother's birthplace, Noto. Lily spent three years in this town buried in snow during the winter.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:19

☐ Grandmother

Grandmother was a person who never smiled. I even thought her face had frozen due to the cold. Her wrinkled face had a dark, almost polished look, just like a wooden mask.

However, this grandmother, who never smiled, loved her granddaughter very much.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:26

☐ Piano

Lily's piano playing became the grandmother's only pleasure. When Lily got tired of playing and tried to stop, she would ask for one more song. The grandmother herself could play the piano, but she wasn't very good. The grandmother, a former teacher, could only play children's songs poorly. And since she would sing along in a hoarse voice, Lily was very embarrassed.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:30

☐ Her End

The grandmother, who was 84 years old at the time, had a back bent at a 90-degree angle, but she had strong legs. She would walk back and forth on a road that was 5 kilometers long without any trouble. "She was like a creature. A flightless bird like a chicken or a kiwi."

One stormy morning, the grandmother passed away on the long road to the market. She had accidentally rolled down a slope and gotten stuck in a ditch. Because of that, it was late when she was discovered.

She was discovered in the snow in early spring.

"She looked like she was still alive. She was very beautiful."

《Posted by: Satie》 May 16th (Tue) 02:35

☐ Family Portrait

When Lily was eight years old, her mother remarried. She got a new little sister. The new father kept his distance from Lily Chou-Chou. Her half-sister didn't warm up to Lily either. Before long, her mother's attitude also became cold, and Lily Chou-Chou returned to the capital to rely on her father before her twelfth birthday.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:00

☐ Father

At first, her father welcomed Lily with a smile. Her father was a kind person. But her busy father was only a presence who took her out to eat a few times a year. In the vast room at dusk, she always hugged her knees. Lily says that's all she remembers. Always hugging her knees. That's all there was, she said.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:03

☐ Room

Lily never once thought she was lonely. She knew the word "lonely," but she didn't think it applied to her. She just stayed still in her room, alone. Without watching TV. Without listening to music.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:05

☐ That Moment

Lily Chou-Chou says it was always dusk.

"The moment when the room grows dim and the air splits in two..." When Lily Chou-Chou said that, the stupid interviewer from "OTO-JIRO" asked, "What do you mean by 'the moment when the air splits in two'?"

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:06

☐ Untitled

Such a stupid man has no right to interview Lily Chou-Chou. If he doesn't understand "the moment when the air splits in two," how can he possibly understand "September Rain's Heart"?

Lily Chou-Chou is not tolerant of such fools. She doesn't explain things in a way they can understand. She continues her story.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:10

☐ Awakening

The moment the air splits in two, a sound starts ringing in my head. Something like light overflows. Something like darkness bursts forth... This is a significant episode from when she awakened to ether and music. If the stupid interviewer hadn't asked the next question, we might have heard more of the core of it.

"What music has influenced you the most?"

Lily Chou-Chou doesn't answer. She doesn't need to answer. She doesn't need anyone else's music. She conceives music and gives birth to it. The amniotic fluid called ether nurtures her music. That's all there is to it.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:27

☐ If you want to know about her childhood

You should listen to "Erotic"

If you want to know about her childhood, you should listen to "Erotic" rather than the "OTO-JIRO" interview. The album "Erotic." For example, "Tree of Silence" is a prose poem that could be called her private novel, and "Videotape" seals within it the very lonely time she spent.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:29

☐ Video Tape

Videotape

Laughing

Crying

Falling

Walking

With Mom

With Dad
With my little sister
With Toto the dog too

Rewind
Rewind
Time goes backwards
Tears spill
This tape, why
I wonder why it's here
I wonder why I have it

Eating cake
Eating cookies
Drinking cola
Eating ice cream
Hair grows
Legs grow
Hands grow
My little sister grows too

Fast forward
Fast forward
Time moves forward
Gradually becoming alone
This tape, why

I wonder why it's here
I wonder why I have it

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:40

☐ Catalyst

The way she grew up is by no means unique. It's a circumstance that can be found anywhere. Many fans are mistaken. Though you can't really call fans who misunderstand, fans.

She's not trying to tell her life story.

She doesn't want pity by telling tales of her hardships. Her past is merely a place that her talent happened to stop by. The past and environment surrounding her, at the moment they intersect with her talent, suddenly take on meaning and begin to shine, becoming a catalyst for her work. If you don't understand this meaning, you should listen to "Erotic."

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:41

☐ Erotic

Erotic

From fragments of images that slipped into a dream
I'm searching for what you desire

The gray of the cloudy sky reflected in the tea
You lifted it up and it melted into the afternoon

What I like isn't everything about you
Erotic, like the wind, like scars, like the sound of the sea

From between the scales (musical scales) you play with
an indifferent air
I begin to hear whether it's a sound or music

The melody you play casually with those fingers, from
the beginning
You play as if tracing a line that's already there
What echoes in the dead-like town is tomorrow's
requiem
Even if I don't think I want to live...

Please find what I desire

The melody you play casually with those fingers, from
the beginning
You play as if tracing a line that's already there
What I like isn't everything about you
Erotic, like the wind, like scars, like the sound of the sea

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:46

☐ I reside within her

She effortlessly turns the unidentified emotions that linger
within me into crystals of ether. It's as if she can see inside
my heart. She doesn't know me, but she feels my presence.
She let me reside within herself.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 17th (Wed) 02:52

☐ "Bradbury Orchestra"

Twelve years old. She enters a boarding mission school.
Around that time, she starts a band for the first time.
That's the "Bradbury Orchestra."
As you know, the true nature of this band is still mostly
unknown.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 18th (Thu) 00:54

☐ Katsuhiko Kayama

Lily Chou-Chou's existence becoming this famous was not
her intention. The one who created that opportunity was
Katsuhiko Kayama. The famous hitmaker, Katsuhiko Kayama.
Leader of "Yellow Fellows." He doesn't choose his clients
when writing songs. He's a jack-of-all-trades, handling
everything from enka-esque new music to cold songs for new
idols. Core fans don't recognize Katsuhiko Kayama outside of
"Yellow Fellows." I believe that the song from Yellow Fellows
is the only music by Katsuhiko Kayama.

It's understandable to think that way. It's absurd to tell anyone to empathize with "Soy Sauce Kids." However, conversely, there are many fans who are thrilled by his versatility. Either way, it's not a great talent. People who do many things widely don't possess true talent.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 18th (Thu) 00:56

□ Philia

At that time, college student Katsuhiro Kayama was in an amateur band called "Bitter Beat." Apparently, they were reasonably well-known in the amateur scene. Then one day, he formed a completely different unit called "Philia" with Shu Noda and Arinori Kinoshita. Keiko Suzuki, that is, Lily, was hired as the vocalist.

Katsuhiro Kayama says he picked up Lily at HMV in Shibuya. But no matter how favorably you look at it, it was Katsuhiro Kayama who was picked up.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 18th (Thu) 00:57

□ Philia

Katsuhiro Kayama's ulterior motives are obvious. He just wanted to get Lily's attention by creating such a band. Katsuhiro Kayama often gets the media to write about stories from that time.

"But she never leaned towards me. She performed her position as a vocalist like a serious accounting woman. She never praised my songs. She never criticized them either."

"It was very difficult to do"

《Posted by: Satie》 May 18th (Thu) 00:58

□ Graduation Commemoration Live

At the university's graduation commemoration live, Philia performed a live show together with Bitter Beat. Minoru Maekawa, an alumnus who came to see the performance, fell in love with Lily at first sight. He worked in the publicity department of Oakwood Music. That coincidence led to an extremely short path to becoming a professional.

Minoru Maekawa later said,
"It wasn't Bitter Beat or Philia, it was just Lily Chou-Chou's voice. The moment I heard it, a shiver ran down my spine."

《Posted by: Satie》 May 18th (Thu) 01:04

□ DEBUT

On February 21, 1995, the unknown band "Philia" suddenly topped the Tower Records chart. Their debut song was "Addiction." There was no flashy promotion. There were no strange tie-ins.

But "Addiction" sold.

Philia sold.

There are no critics who can analyze why it sold.

It's all the effect of ether.

And so, Philia's debut was shockingly impactful.

《Posted by: Satie》May 18th (Thu) 01:07

□ The Backside of Glory

But honestly, Philia was not a band to be praised. Philia's songs are all oddities with Katsuhiro Kayama's persistent melodies sticking in your nose. It's said that Lily Chou-Chou wrote all the lyrics, but compared to her later works, the content is so terrible that it can only be thought that a ghostwriter wrote them. There is no doubt. A ghostwriter wrote them. It's a common tactic used by record companies to give credit to talentless vocalists. If she were a talentless vocalist, that would have been fine.

However, Lily Chou-Chou was an exception. Neither the record company guys nor Katsuhiro Kayama could see through to her true nature. Her talent was sealed away for two years by the existence of Philia, by the ego of the ambitious Katsuhiro Kayama. Katsuhiro Kayama used Philia to the fullest as a stepping stone for his own advancement, eventually becoming a first-class producer.

In the end, the only one who benefited from Philia was Katsuhiro Kayama.

《Posted by: Satie》May 18th (Thu) 01:14

□ Disbandment

"Addiction," "Abnormality," "Manic & Depression," and "Fetish."

Three singles and one album were released, and Philia disbanded in just one year. Then, Katsuhiro Kayama quickly formed a new unit, "Yellow Fellows."

"I was hungry for a powerful sound," Katsuhiro Kayama explains his motivation for forming the new unit. He solidified his major status with this success.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 02:25

□ Revival

One year after the disbandment of "Philia," Lily quietly revives. Arinori Kinoshita, who was the bassist for Philia, was the least prominent member. After Philia disbanded, he changed his name to UFO Kinoshita and produced the band "Bad Jokes", but it didn't take off. The leader of Bad Jokes caught fire in variety shows, and when the band came to a complete halt, Kinoshita received contact from Lily.

"The ether has started to move."

With those words, Kinoshita understood everything. When he visited the studio, Shu Noda was also there.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 02:27

□ Shu Noda

Shu Noda, whose arranging ability had been highly regarded for some time and was even called the brain of Philia, dabbled in some film music after the disbandment, but as the films themselves didn't become popular, he gradually faded into the background. "You Are Good," "Needle and Time," "Waltz of the Clouds" - these were Shu Noda's works for films that no one knows.

His best work from that time would have to be the hit game "Paleo" series. Or perhaps the NHK special series "Evolution and Genes." The essence of world music he honed there would later play a role in polishing Lily's sound.

Shu Noda had a different talent and pride than Katsuhiro Kayama. If he hadn't participated in Lily's restart, he might have become like Ryuichi Sakamoto or Joe Hisaishi.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 02:28
☐ The Birth of Lily Chou-Chou

Lily, accompanied by these two, resumed her activities. This was the birth of Lily Chou-Chou. Some might see this as revenge against Katsuhiro Kayama. But that's not it. "The one who understood the least was Kayama," Noda asserts without hesitation. As a producer, Shu Noda is not exactly shrewd. In a sense, he's no match for Katsuhiro Kayama. He's an artist who has no interest in business.

However, in terms of arrangement, he is undoubtedly superior to Katsuhiro Kayama. The famous story about Katsuhiro Kayama wanting to hire him as an arranger for his new album proves that point perfectly. Noda Shu casually turned down this job. Katsuhiro Kayama criticized Noda Shu as a foolish man who wasted a golden opportunity, but the fool is Katsuhiro Kayama himself. After losing Noda Shu, Katsuhiro Kayama's music can only be described as garbage.

Noda Shu is a second-rate producer. But Noda Shu is a first-rate arranger. It is also a fact that "Jewel" would not have been born without his participation. But even Noda Shu, when faced with the talent of Lily, had no choice but to recognize himself as an ordinary person. "In the face of genius, the ordinary person can only be frustrated. Because it is something that can never be obtained."

That's what Noda Shu says about Lily.

Mini-Album "Jewel"
 (Released July 21, 1997)

"Lake"
 "Three Doors"
 "Rumble Fish"
 "Experiment of Love"
 "Dog's Eye"
 "Music Box"

Unfortunately, I was unable to listen to this album when it firstly came out.

It was a year after that when I met Lily Chou-Chou. It was during the time of the second album, *Erotic*.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 23:42

□ "Erotic"

Fateful encounter do exist, one shoplifted CD.
That was "Erotic."

Any CD would've been fine to steal. My hand just picked that one on its own. I didn't even check out the cover, just stuffed it in my bag and bolted out of the store. The anti-theft alarm on the CD started blaring like crazy, but my only good quality is being fast. While I was running, I ripped the alarm off the jacket and chucked it in a gutter. I kept running and thought about ditching the stolen CD somewhere. But for some reason, I just couldn't. The face on the cover was staring at me. Lily Chou-Chou's eyes were locked on me. That gaze, like, pierced me to my core, and I got total goosebumps.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 23:44

□ "Resonance (Empty Stone)"

I felt like I needed to steal something again. This time, I went into an electronics store and stole a CD Walkman. This time, I was caught. Because it was my first time, the lecture was very long, but they let me go. That foolish store clerk was so impressed with his own wise decision to let a "promising young person" go free that he completely forgot to take the CD Walkman back from me. It's still in my pocket.

I had enough money to pay, but I left the store without paying. I didn't mean anything bad by it. That's the truth. I didn't even realize for a while that I was still carrying the stolen CD Walkman.

I thought about going back to return it, but it felt stupid, so I didn't. I went straight to the park and listened to Lily Chou-Chou for the very first time.

The first song. "Resonance (Empty Stone)."

The long road twisted and turned, to get here
It still goes on
Only time has quietly carved this

I almost became an adult, and then I stopped
Inside my heart
I discovered many mirrors

The joy of meeting you, the pain of meeting you is less painful,
Because in the place where heart is, a empty stone is hiding.

I was born just to live
Is there another meaning?
Whatever that may be, could it be the words 'love'?

I glance at the words written on a torn poster at the side of the road: "Love is here, God is within you." It's cut off there.

At the edge of the universe, at the end of the soul

From within this body, a resonance is born, reaching you and resonating. Spreading beyond the meaning of words
The joy of meeting you, is even more painful than missing you.

That's because an empty stone still hides within my heart.

The melody felt like a gentle touch.

The words felt harsh against my skin.

I felt something called ether, something I would later come to know, for the first time in my life.

And then, tears overflowed.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 23:53

□ Trying to Become One

After becoming completely one with "Erotic," I then stole the debut album "Jewel" from Tower Records. Stealing had become a kind of ceremony that connected me and Lily Chou-Chou.

I also rushed to collect information.

I bought a bunch of old music magazines at used bookstores. "OTO-JIRO," "AC-DC," "SCUD"...

I searched for the name Lily Chou-Chou among those.

[OTO-JIRO," June 1997 issue. An article about the release of "Jewel.]

"Lily Chou-Chou. If you don't recognize the name, you might remember her as the vocalist of Philia. It's the band that Yellow Fellows leader, Katsuhiro Kayama, used to be in charge of. She's the girl with long hair and a kind of listless look. The girl who was once rumored to be Katsuhiro Kayama's lover has made a comeback. It's an album where you can experience a deep, listless, and slightly occult world."

The content of this article made me want to throw up. Deep. Listless. Occult.

This writer has no normal sensibilities.

[AC-DC, June issue. Release information.]

"Lily Chou-Chou, who fascinated fans with her unique atmosphere during the Philia era and was sadly retired, has returned. Her solo debut, 'Jewel,' has a unique finish that is characteristic of her. She wrote all the lyrics and music, fully demonstrating her many talents. It's an album to look out for."

I guess they're trying to praise it a little? It's a kind of unsatisfying article.

[SCUD, December 1997 issue.]

A special feature article where regular music critic Hajime Kiyokawa summarizes and reviews the albums of that year. "Jewel" was ranked number one. "The first time I heard it, I thought, 'Whoa.' Then, I thought it probably wouldn't sell. Both this 'Whoa' and 'won't sell' are compliments. If you listen to it,

I thought it might drive someone to suicide, so I haven't listened to it a second time. This is also a compliment. Just hearing it once, you won't forget it for ten years. This is a masterpiece."

My whole body trembled.
This writer has a pretty sensitive antenna.
Maybe he can see the ether, too.

《Posted by: Satie》May 19th (Fri) 23:55
□ Sleepless Night

I couldn't sleep that night.
My heart was racing, and Hajime Kiyokawa's words kept repeating in my head. Before long, an unbearable feeling of jealousy welled up inside me. There's no way anyone could truly understand Lily Chou-Chou. Except for me, who had successfully resonated.
Wanting to erase Hajime Kiyokawa's words from my mind, I put on my headphones and poured Lily Chou-Chou into my head.

Wounds That Heals

The sunset is carrying sadness
The clear air grows heavy
If every day is just a repeat, it would be better to end it in one day
If life is the flip side of death
I want to try dying, like I'm alive.

A story that begins with love
If I throw it away, let's go back to a blank page, a world with nothing
What I really like isn't you
It's your bitter sighs, I just want that, that I can believe that
An expressionless face in front of the mirror
There's no point in forcing a smile
I'll fill the sink with water, wash my face, and go out, right now
I want to end it all, There's no reason for me to be here anymore
The cyclamen I raised with my blood, has formed a bud
If the flower blooms red
My wounds will also heal
A story that begins with love
If I throw it away, let's go back to a blank page, a world with nothing
What I really like isn't you
It's your bitter sighs, I just want that, That's why I can believe in.

The cyclamen that appears in the lyric is her birth flower. A white cyclamen. Its flower language is "jealousy." If a white cyclamen bloomed red, what would its flower language be?

田園。

それが“犯人”の目に映る風景だった。

Rice fields.

That was the scenery reflected in the "culprit's" eyes.

……「エーテル」。

きっとそうだ。

彼女は常にもどかしい世界を泳ぎながらその世界に嫉妬していた。その世界とは同時に自分自身のことなのだ。

"....Ether."

I'm sure of it.

She was always swimming in a frustrating world, and she was jealous of that world.
And that world was, at the same time, herself.

第
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Chapter 8: Sweater



やさしい気持ちでいたいから
セーターを編んだ
できそこないのセーター
自分だったら着たくないけど
パパは喜んでいた

散歩するパパの後姿
茶色のセーター

最近ようやく
会話も弾むようになった

苦労してようやく仲のいい
他人になれた

血が繋がっていることが
未だに信じられない

散歩するパパの後姿
茶色のセーター

肉親とを感じるのは
何時になるんだろう
それまではパパ
息をされていて下さい

散歩するパパの後姿
できそこないのセーター

もうすぐ終わる人生
がんばって生きたのだから
がんばって死んで下さい

Because I want to have kind feelings
I knitted a sweater
A poorly made sweater
I wouldn't want to wear it myself
But Dad was happy

Dad's figure from behind, as he walks
A brown sweater

Lately, finally
Our conversations have become lively

After much struggle, we finally became close
Like good strangers

I still can't believe
That we're connected by blood

Dad's figure from behind, as he walks
A brown sweater

When will I feel like we're family?
Until then, Dad,
Please keep breathing

Dad's figure from behind, as he walks
A poorly made sweater

A life that will soon end
You lived your life with all your might
So please, die with all your might

《Posted by: Satie》 May 21st (Sun) 01:09

☐ Rice Fields

A rural area spreading out between the mountains.
A peaceful landscape.
But isn't everyone misunderstanding something? A peaceful landscape and peaceful people are different things.
At least, I've never met a single peaceful person in this place.
When I get home, my unemployed father is watching the news channel. The news is just depressing.
Dad, watching that stuff isn't going to bring any light into your life. Besides, this guy isn't my real father.
My real dad became a co-signer for a friend with bad spending habits, got all the land that had been passed down for generations taken away, and disappeared somewhere. I've heard rumors that he's doing some kind of business in Hokkaido.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 21st (Sun) 01:10

☐ Fake Father

This new father used to work at a pharmaceutical factory.
My mother works at a rental car place along the highway. I don't know how the two of them met. One day, I don't know why, but this guy was at our house. I didn't really know who he was. At first, he'd say, "I'm going home now," and he'd go home at night, but eventually he started saying, "I'm going out." A few months later,

a boy who had been put up for adoption came and became my younger brother.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 21st (Sun) 01:16

☐ Change of Name

My last name was changed from "Tsusaka" to "Hasumi."
Because my mother and the man registered their marriage. My brother's name was "Shin'ichi," but since my name was "Yūichi," having brothers named Yūichi and Shin'ichi was inconvenient, and also with the intention of strengthening the bonds between brothers, his name was changed to "Shinji." Officially, he was "Hasumi Shin'ichi." "Hasumi Shinji" was just a nickname, kind of. It was decided that he would go by this name in public. In this way, "Tsusaka Yūichi" and "Hasumi Shin'ichi" were erased from this world once, and "Hasumi Yūichi" and "Hasumi Shinji" were born. The birth of brothers with no blood connection. But, if things didn't work out between my mother and my fake father, who knows when and where "Tsusaka Yūichi" and "Hasumi Shin'ichi" might reappear. I always thought my name was my own. But at that moment, I realized that was a mistake. My current name, "Hasumi Yūichi," and my former name, "Tsusaka Yūichi," were not mine.
My mother, having acquired a new husband, was happy, saying, "Now I don't have to work overtime anymore."
"Shinji," contrary to his parents' intentions, only resented being renamed. He didn't become attached to me at all. For me, "Shinji" was just my younger brother, and a stranger.

《Posted by: Satie》May 21st (Sun) 01:17

☐ Personal Computer

On my birthday in sixth grade, my mother and my fake father asked me, "Is there anything you want?" and I answered, "A computer." But really, there was something else I wanted. That was, without a doubt, something I could call "my own." Something that no one else could mess with, something I could say was only mine. That kind of desire was vaguely starting to grow. But I didn't know what that was, so I had no choice but to answer "a computer." When I started using the internet, a world of fake names spread out before me. It was a very comfortable world for me. An anonymous world where you don't have to use your real name. It might have been a world that felt completely natural and without any discomfort to me, someone living under the false name of "Hasumi Yuichi." Or maybe it was because it was a place where I didn't have to feel the complex of living under a false name.

《Posted by: Satie》May 21st (Sun) 01:19

☐ Inside the House

My new father looked strangely young. He was thirty, but he looked only about twenty. It's better than a thirty-year-old who looks forty. But he was a plain man. My mother said that since my previous father liked to have fun, a man like this was just right. However, this father was fired from his job last March. My mother had to work overtime again, and I had to be with my unrelated father and brother until nine o'clock at night. When I get home, my father is watching

He's always doing that. There's no conversation. We're strangers. Even between my brother and father, there was an atmosphere that made it hard to believe they were related. My brother just plays video games in his room all the time.

The sound leaks into my room through the thin walls. I hate that sound, so I do my homework in the kitchen.

《Posted by: Satie》May 21st (Sun) 01:21

☐ "Lilyphilia," "Philia," and "Satie"

My father keeps the TV volume low out of consideration. This man, who can no longer contribute money to the household, was an unnatural presence just by being here. I wish he and the boy upstairs would just move out somewhere soon.

I shut myself in my room upstairs. I put on my headphones, immerse myself in Lily, and type on my computer keyboard. I'm typing Lily's information into my homepage.

"Lilyphilia." That's the name of my homepage.

"Philia" is my handle.

Many Lily fans gather on this site. The number of hits has exceeded twenty thousand. But Lily's fans are all shy. There are many lurkers. The people who post on the message board are mostly regulars.

[Bear], [Sleepy Head], [Pascal], [Nevira71], [Ironman 29], [Satie]. The last one, [Satie], is my other handle. I pretend to be one of the regulars.

and I blend into the message board. [Satie] is a character who
 can say whatever they want.
 This is the only place where I can be free.
 This is the only place where I can be myself.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 21st (Sun) 23:33
☐ Phone Call

The phone rings.
 It's Hoshino. He tells me to come out. I go out on my bike.
 The night road.
 The moon is bright. Scary big. The squeaking sound of my
 bike's rusty chain makes me spontaneously hum "Music Box."

Music Box

Stick a needle into the round, ripe moon
 Inject the sucked-up sand into the blood vessels
 The comb teeth of the music box
 Make a clinking sound
 The doll opens its mechanical eyes
 The rusted heart was once
 Shining brightly with gold plating
 The mouth is made to smile

Happy Music Box
 Praying for happiness
 Envious of happiness
 When did I forget how to cry?
 When did I lose my smile?
 Now, I live only in the comfortable sleep
 and the gaps between the next sleep.
 The rusted heart, even now
 If I just wind the screw, it moves a little
 My lips are swollen and puffy, but
 If I put on lipstick, I'll even kiss
 The comb teeth of the music box
 Make a clinking sound
 Singing a mechanical song
 The hoarse voice
 Changes a baby's laughter
 Into a scream
 Happy Music Box
 Resentful of happiness
 Wished for happiness
 Who made this body?
 What do you want me to do?

Now, I live only in the comfortable sleep
and the gaps between the next sleep.

This song, "Music Box," literally begins with a music box intro. I copied those eight bars of the intro on my harmonica. My lips trace Lily Chou-Chou's melody. How can I explain this feeling of ecstasy?

Next, I started to copy the intro of "Erotic" on an old organ.

Copying this song was extremely difficult. But it goes without saying that that endless time was a blissful time for me.

《Posted by: Satie》May 21st (Sun) 23:34

□ Hoshino

The night road.

By the time I finished singing "Music Box," my destination came into view. There's a small vacant lot next to the neighborhood taxi company. Hoshino's father runs the taxi company, and that vacant lot is where Hoshino and his friends hang out. Tsujii, Iida, and Tadano are there. The four of them are playing basketball. To be precise, it's three of them. Tadano's job is to go pick up the ball when it rolls too far away.

"Did you bring it?"

Hoshino says. I take some bills out of my pocket and hand them to Iida.

Okay, here is the translation of that text:

"This isn't enough."

Iida says with a dissatisfied look, handing it to Hoshino.

"Want a smoke?"

Hoshino takes a cigarette out of his pocket, puts one in his own mouth and lights it, then offers it to me. When I reach out to take it, he pulls it away and holds the cigarette near my mouth. He means for me to take it with my mouth. But the lit end is facing me. I open my mouth and take the cigarette, careful not to touch the flame.

"Smoke it properly."

Hoshino pushes it in with his finger. A sizzling sound comes from the back of my throat, and I involuntarily spit out the cigarette. Tsujii and Iida burst out laughing.

"Work harder to earn more."

Hoshino pats me on the shoulder. With this, I'm released. I get back on my bike and head home. On the short ten-minute ride home, I hum Lily's "Home." I hum the whole thing, from the intro. If anyone heard me, they'd probably think I was crazy. But I won't meet anyone. Rice paddies stretch out on both sides of the straight road. The ripe moon is reflected in both of them.

Home

Immense feelings

In a box-like home

Confined
 Such houses
 Many,
 Many,
 Fill this town to the brim.
 I'm on the rooftop,
 Listening to your story,
 While holding back my pee
 The wind is cold
 Your words are hot, but
 That voice
 Makes me freeze.
 A love that's almost mad
 In box-like homes
 is confined.
 Such houses
 Many,
 Many,
 Turn on their lights,
 Illuminating this planet.
 I'm on the rooftop,
 While being held by you,
 Holding back my pee

The wind is cold
 Other people's bodies are warm, but
 That body heat
 Makes me freeze
 Hating someone
 Confined
 In a box-like home
 Loving someone
 Confined
 In a box-like home
 Those kinds of homes
 Many
 Many
 Supporting their roofs
 Are looking up at the red moon

とめどもないフィリアの言葉。 Philia's endless words.

それは犯人のみが知る暗い闇。 That is a dark abyss that only the culprit knows.

第
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Chapter 9: Breathing



アラベスク	Arabesque
グライド	Glide
友達	Friends
土曜日の郵便	Saturday Mail
孤独の隙間	Gaps of Loneliness
セーター	Sweater
花の瞳	Flower Eyes
九月の雨の心臓	September Rain's Heart
飛べない翼	Wings That Can't Fly
回復する傷	Wound That Heals

《Posted by: Satie》 May 23rd (Tue) 03:47

□ Clione

There's a student in our class called Clione.

His real name is Hayato Honjo.

Despite having such a masculine name, he's the smallest and palest student in the class. He has a perfectly round face, and the hair on both sides of his head sticks out like Astro Boy's. He's had this characteristic since elementary school. In elementary school, he was called Atom. And then, when we entered junior high, he became Clione.

It's like an angel swimming beneath the ice floes.

It's not a funny story, but Honjo looked exactly like this clione. If any of the guys at our school saw a clione, one hundred out of one hundred of them would think of Hayato Honjo. A lovely creature swimming beneath the ice floes. But it was a tragedy for Hayato Honjo to resemble such a thing.

Partly because of his immature face, Clione was persecuted by vicious classmates. He'd run away, be cornered, and then suffer terrible abuse. Adults call it the "bullying problem," but it's not appropriate to call it a problem. The human race, a species that loves abuse, is simply living healthily in a healthy environment, and healthily toying with the weak.

It's the relationship between a rabbit and a lion. A rabbit can only run away. But humans aren't always eaten by lions.

Humans have weapons. A hunting rifle for a lion. But what kind of weapon is there against these wild beasts in school uniforms?

No exit.

Today, Clione is sprinting down the hallway again. Several students are chasing after him. The ringleader is Hideo Kuribayashi, who is also a member of the soccer team. He's been with Clione since kindergarten. Thanks to Kuribayashi, Clione is guaranteed a miserable life.

It doesn't really matter, but speaking in terms of wordplay, Kuribayashi could have been Clione. Actually, back in the day, this guy was called "Chestnut Man" (Kuri Otoko). He was one step away from Clione. However, when Hayato Honjo started to be called Clione, Chestnut Man made his friends call him Hide. He basically forced the Clione name onto Hayato Honjo and pretended to be Hidetoshi Nakata. Clione is captured and dragged into the bathroom. He's punched, stripped naked, toilet paper is wrapped all over his body, and dirty water is poured on him. His face is shoved into the toilet bowl. Clione is emitting a voiceless scream, like radio waves. A cry for SOS. My pinky finger is resonating. It's twitching.

But Clione, there's nothing I can do for you.

I used to laugh. I used to laugh along at Clione's plight.

That's how it was until a year ago. Back then, what was so funny about seeing a scene like that?

Now, I can't remember.

I feel like I'm suffocating. I desperately want to listen to Lily. If I don't listen to Lily, I feel like I'll suffocate and die.

...I'm a Lily addict.

《Posted by: Satie》May 24th (Wed) 02:20

□ Breathing

In June 1999, Lily Chou-Chou's new album will be released.
The title is "Breathing."

When I found that article in "OTO-JIRO," I involuntarily
took a deep breath.

"Breathing"!

Just that alone was enough for me to understand her
message. I felt a sacred breath throughout my body, and
goosebumps danced on my skin.

"Breathing"!

I say it out loud.
I'm alive! I'm alive!

《Posted by: Satie》May 24th (Wed) 02:26

□ Breathing 2

Under the same sky, Lily Chou-Chou is alive.
Breathing in and breathing out the same air,
Lily Chou-Chou is alive.

I'm alive too.

What a wonderful word. What a wonderful rhythm.

I imagine it in my head.

Lily Chou-Chou's voice.

Lily Chou-Chou's melody.

Lily Chou-Chou's new world.

...Today is the best day.

I carefully take the CD out of the "Erotic" case. I put on my
headphones. I lie down on my bed and turn on the switch.
The sound of the guitar instantly stops my blood flow.

I turn the volume up to MAX.

《Posted by: Satie》May 24th (Wed) 02:32

□ Breathing 3

This floating feeling of resonance!

Breathing!

Breathing!

Breathing!

Resonance!

Resonance!

Resonance!

Breathing!

Breathing!

Breathing!

A giant stone slab floats in the blue sky.

White

wings,

wings,

wings!

They burst through my back and dance in the sky!

I'm flying in the sky.

Flying.

Flying.

I'm falling headfirst!

Falling!

Falling!

Tears!

Tears!

Tears!

Angel!

Angel!

Angel!

A summer uniform blouse.

Yoko Kuno.

Yoko Kuno.

Yoko Kuno.

Yoko Kuno.

Yoko Kuno.

Yoko Kuno.

.....

The setting sun's rays.

The fine hair on her white cheeks.

Piano...

《Posted by: Satie》 May 24th (Wed) 02:34

☐ Phone Call

I'm tapped on the shoulder and open my eyes to see my father looking down at me.

He's holding the cordless phone in his hand.

"It's a phone call for you."

I answer the phone.

My father leaves the room.

A voice comes from the other end of the line.

It's Hoshino.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 24th (Wed) 02:35

☐ Window

After hanging up, I sneak out of the house through the window.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 25th (Thu) 05:46

☐ Hajime Kiyokawa

Music critic Hajime Kiyokawa gave Lily's "Breathing" high praise. The following is an excerpt from the June issue of "SCUD."

"I'm happy that Lily Chou-Chou has finally grown up. It's not that she was a child before. Up until now, Lily Chou-Chou (I'll deliberately ignore Philia) had a sharpness like a knife. That's what made her a unique presence, it's true, but Lily herself, glimpsed through that, was as if she herself were a work of Lily's art. A work of art called Lily Chou-Chou. But 'Breathing' is an album where you can almost see the outline of Keiko Suzuki herself.

'You lived your life with all your might, so give it all you got in the end.'

There are these kinds of startling expressions here and there as always, but, for example, even in this song 'Sweater,' what a calm state of mind is it being sung in. Certainly, we could catch her 'breathing' from 'Jewel' and 'Erotic' as well. But that was an irregular, restless breath, like a sigh or a moan. This 'Breathing' conveys the living breath of Lily Chou-Chou the human being. It's comforting. It's finished with a simple, acoustic-centered sound, an unusually calm album for Lily. It's safe to say that it's a new frontier for Lily Chou-Chou."

Hajime Kiyokawa's review stirs my imagination even more.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 25th (Thu) 05:50

□ Black Sweater

"Sweater"...I wonder what kind of song it is. I try to imagine Lily in a sweater. In the advertisement, Lily was wearing black. That was

probably a sweater? Or maybe a dress? That innocent monochrome photograph was overflowing with pure ether. With that photograph burned into my mind, I head to school. When I pass through the school gates, Clione is walking, carrying several of his tormentors' bags. He's being kicked in the rear from behind.

"Oh, Honjo-kun, you're such a hard worker in the morning." The one who said that was the assistant homeroom teacher, Osanai. Osanai, for some reason, lifts one of her high-heeled feet in the air and then hangs her own bag around Clione's neck. She's another one who participates in abusing students.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 25th (Thu) 05:51

□ Sachino Osanai

Recently, they've started assigning two teachers to each class. The school says it's to deepen the interaction with students, but really it's just because there are too many teachers due to the declining birthrate. Someone like an assistant homeroom teacher would never have been hired in the old days. You can tell just by looking at this Osanai. She's clearly unqualified to be a teacher. This young female teacher was thrown into the boys' bathroom and abused right after she was assigned to this school. Ever since then, she's become a person who bullies weak students and fawns over strong ones. And she's most afraid of the homeroom teacher, Onda Akira, finding out about that pathetic position, so she's the kind of woman who would do anything to prevent that. That's our assistant homeroom teacher, Sachino Osanai. As soon as she enters the classroom, Osanai surveys the room with a frightened look. Out in the hallway...

Every time male students flip up her skirt in the hallway or on the stairs, or grope her butt, Osanai lets out a high-pitched squeal like a girl and pretends to be happy. Because of this, she's despised by the girls and constantly given the cold shoulder.

Sumika Kanzaki, with her green-dyed hair, is the most vulgar girl in the class.

"Osanai, you damn woman, get raped," was her catchphrase.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 25th (Thu) 05:52

☐ Suffocating Classroom

A classroom where I can't breathe.
A hallway where I can't breathe.
A schoolyard where I can't breathe.
Suffocating!
Suffocating!
Suffocating!

Ether! Ether! Ether!
Breathing! Breathing! Breathing!
...Deep breath!

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:27

☐ Release Date

The release date for "Breathing" has arrived.

I was so excited that I couldn't sleep well the night before. I skipped school and took the train. It takes forty minutes to get to the city. I hurry to the Tower Records in front of the station.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:28

☐ The Usual Ritual

I don't buy Lily's CDs. I get them by shoplifting. That's the ritual.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:29

☐ Failure

However, that day, I messed up and the school was notified.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:32

☐ Apology

In the afternoon, the assistant homeroom teacher, Osanai, comes all the way.

Osanai bows her head to the store clerk many times. Then, with a furious expression, she glares at me.

"What are you doing! You should just buy it!"

Osanai, perhaps as an apology, went out of her way to buy three copies of "Breathing."

Then she bowed her head again and again many times.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:39

☐ Train

When we leave the store, Osanai hands me one copy of "Breathing."

"Don't ever do it again."

After that, she didn't say a single word.
I didn't have anything to say either, so I walked behind her, keeping a slight distance. And so we arrived at the station. We get on the train together. We sit side-by-side on the seats. I'm captivated by the "Breathing"'s CD jacket. Gradually, I drift away from this world and am sucked into the photograph on the cover.

"Let me see."

Osanai takes "Breathing" from me and slowly begins to peel off the cellophane. The other two copies remain tucked under Osanai's arm, still in Tower Records' yellow bag. Why isn't she opening those? Why mine? Or maybe she's already forgotten that they contain the same CD.

"Breathing" being defiled in Osanai's hands.
...Lily being defiled.
Osanai opens the lid.
Please, don't touch the disc.

Don't put your fingerprints on it.
Osanai is absentmindedly staring at the design on the disc.

"Do you like Lily Chou-Chou?"
I nod.

"I see. That's an unusual taste."
"....."

Osanai closes the lid and hands me the case.
It barely escaped contamination. I discreetly wipe the case with my shirt sleeve.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:42
☐ Earphones

The train ride is forty minutes long.
The loud diesel engine noise masks the awkward atmosphere. Osanai takes out a CD Walkman from her bag and puts one earphone in her ear. She reaches out her hand to me.

"Lend me...the one from earlier."
I have to take the Lily CD, which I had once put away in my bag, out again.

The brand-new disc was finally contaminated by Osanai's fingerprints. A faint, crackling sound leaks out.
"Breathing" is playing right in front of me.
Osanai hands me one of the earphones.

From that tiny speaker, the first song, "Arabesque," is playing.
 "Arabesque," which I've never heard before.
 Coming from such a crude thing...

I almost faint from anger. I can feel my whole body trembling.
 My ritual has been ruined by this idiot.
 There's no turning back now.
 But I wasn't in a position to resist.
 I reverently accept the earphone and put it in my ear.
 Trying to hear as little as possible.

If it were any other CD, I could have just thrown it away later.
 But this is Lily's "Breathing."
 No matter what the situation, once it has become mine,
 I can never treat it carelessly. I'm so frustrated I can't stand it.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:44
☐ "Arabesque"

Osanai has her eyes closed,
 listening to "Arabesque" with one ear.
 "This is good, isn't it?"
 Please, don't say anything.

".....Transparent ether."

I doubt my ears.
 The words that leaked from Osanai's mouth.

The word "ether."
 She definitely said it.
 I look and see tears welling up in Osanai's closed eyes.
 I hold my breath.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:45
☐ Habits of a Believer

Suddenly, Osanai takes off the earphones and hands them to me.

"No good. I have to listen to it properly by myself after all!"

Saying that, Osanai carefully clutches the yellow Tower Records bag to her chest.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 26th (Fri) 04:48
☐ The Administrator's Job

When I get home, I listen to the new album "Breathing" over and over until almost two in the morning.
 And I type the new album's data into my homepage.
 Third Album "Breathing" (Released June 21, 1999)

"Arabesque"
 Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
 Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
 "Glide"
 Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou

Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Friends"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Saturday Mail"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Gaps of Loneliness"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Sweater"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Flower Eyes"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"September Rain's Heart"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Wings That Can't Fly"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou
"Wound That Heals"

Lyrics/Music: Lily Chou-Chou
Arrangement: Lily Chou-Chou

Huh? Lily did everything, even the arrangement.
I wonder if Noda Shu has been dismissed.
Then, I make a post on the message board under the name [Philia].

>《Posted by: Philia》June 22nd (Tue) 02:40
>□ Breathing Released!
>It's finally out! "Breathing"!
>Have you experienced the transparent ether yet?
>Well, what are your opinions?

Posts come in one after another. It feels great.
I suddenly remember Osanai.
I think that Osanai might be mixed in with these posts.

《Posted by: Satie》May 27th (Sat) 02:52
□ Akira Onda

Two days later, my mother is called to the school.
I'm alone in the classroom. I've been sitting in my seat since a while ago. Osanai told me to stay here a little while ago, and then went somewhere.

The homeroom teacher, Akira Onda, appears in the classroom. He's in his uniform.

Akira Onda is the advisor for the baseball club.

Normally, this would be the time when he'd be on the field, hitting grounders to the close-cropped baseball team members.

It's the final stretch before the summer tournament, and, bah! It's all your fault my schedule's been completely messed up. That's the expression on his face, and that's how he acts.

"Huh? Where's Ms. Osanai?"

I thought about saying, "She just left a moment ago," but the words wouldn't come out.

I just lifted my butt off the seat a little and acted flustered. Akira Onda sits down in front of me and scratches his head restlessly.

He doesn't look at me once.

"So, you shoplifted. Did it feel good?"

I remain silent, looking down.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 27th (Sat) 02:55

□ Hallway

The three of us head to the guidance room together. Onda grabs my shoulder, who was walking in the very back, and forces me to walk in the very front.

He gives my back a slap.

"Have some confidence, Hasumi!"

Onda offers some completely incomprehensible encouragement.

He slaps my butt.

"Hasumi, why don't you try running?"

I start to jog a little because he told me to.

"Idiot, not now."

Osanai laughs quietly.

"I'm saying you should run on the field."

I understood what he meant.

"You're really itching to run, aren't you?"

Onda pokes me in the back from behind.

《Posted by: Satie》 May 27th (Sat) 02:58

□ In the Guidance Room

My mother is sitting alone in the guidance room.

I hold back the urge to cry.

It's not just today. It was the same during class observations, during the sports festival, during relatives' Buddhist memorial services, when I ran into my mother shopping in the shopping district, when I saw my fake father lining up last at the bus stop, and when I was with my younger brother "Shinji",

even when we passed each other in the hallway.
I feel like crying whenever I see my family outside of the house. I don't know why, but I feel pathetic. I have no confidence in my family.
I even felt like crying the other day when "Shinji" won the gold prize in the all-school drawing competition and was commended.

I try not to look at her face as much as possible, and sit down next to her. I try to look only at the floor.

"Yuichi-kun, the other day, he shoplifted."
Onda says, with a bitter smile.
I could almost hear the sound of the blood draining from my mother's face.

《Posted by: Satie》May 27th (Sat) 03:02
☐ Nuclear Weapon

I knew she'd cry.
I'm the one who wants to cry.
That's what I thought, at that moment.
My mother moved with lightning speed.
Suddenly, my hair, my face, my throat were grabbed, and whether it was a slap or a punch, I don't know, it was something I don't understand, and whether it was painful or not, during that time, which seemed strangely long,
I thought, if a nuclear weapon suddenly fell, and with a sudden, tremendous flash of light, along with the blast, if this body were to evaporate in an instant.

I probably don't have time to feel anything, but still, I'm taking this moment that I can't even see with my eyes and feeling it strangely long like this, and at that moment, surely, I'll remember this incident from this day, and I'll think, come to think of it, I was hit by my mother back then too, but I didn't feel any pain or anything at all, and I'll definitely think back on that, or something like that.

《Posted by: Satie》May 27 (Sat) 03:03
☐ Future Channel and Real Channel

The attack was super sudden. My mom, with her hair all messed up, froze like a statue with a crying face. When I looked up, I saw the underside of Onda's chin, with all his stubble, and his nostrils. I could even see his nose hairs, gross. But I'm still in the Future Channel.

In the Real Channel, things are crazy between the teacher, the student, and my mom.

"Now, chill out! Mom! Please!"

My mom grabs a tissue from her bag and wipes her face.
"Shoplifting, you know, it's not that weird for kids this age. Well, if your kid messes up, you get mad. If a student messes up, I'll also get mad. That's normal, but, getting emotional won't fix anything. Hasumi is a modern kid, you know. There are things you don't get about what they're thinking. But if you actually talk to them, there are things you have to actually listen to them about."

As my mom starts to chill, Osanai starts explaining what happened the day before yesterday in detail.

"A single CD is still shoplifting."

Who is she trying to convince? My mother repeated that to herself over and over.

《Posted by: Satie》May 27 (Sat) 03:05

□ Glide

The after-school announcement plays.
The guidance counselor's office suddenly grows dim.
The moment the air splits in two...
Ether creeps in with the shadows.
I sense its presence.
Lily begins to play in my head.

Just as Hajime Kiyokawa said, Lily Chou-Chou's ether might have changed a bit with "Breathing".
If "Jewel" and "Erotic" were her mental landscapes, then this "Breathing" is her message.

Lily Chou-Chou is trying to tell me something.
...to me.

I have to receive it. That. That something.

Glide. Glide. Glide.

Glide.

I wanna be
I wanna be
I wanna be just like a melody,
just like a simple sound,
like in harmony

I wanna be
I wanna be

I wanna be just like the sky,
just fly so far away,
to another place

To be away from all,
to be one,
of everything

I wanna be
I wanna be

I wanna be just like the wind,
just flowing in the air,
through an open space 1

I wanna be
I wanna be

I wanna be just like the sea,
just swaying in the water,
so to be at ease

To be away from all,
to be one,
of everything

I wanna be
I wanna be

I wanna be just like a melody,
just like a simple sound,
like in harmony

(I want to be, I want to be, I want to be a melody)
...Those words run through my entire body.
(I want to be the sky, I want to be the wind.)
...That feeling turns into pain and tightens around my
throat. Before I knew it, tears were overflowing. Onda and
Osanai are looking at me with surprised expressions.
My mother mutters again.

Even a single CD is still shoplifting.
If a nuclear weapon were to explode, the sensation of that
moment of vaporization would surely be more cool than hot,
wouldn't it? In the fleeting moment when the magic of ether
fades, I think about things like that.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 9th (Fri) 11:51 PM

□ Those who defile Lily deserve ten thousand deaths.

Night.

After my family has fallen asleep, I quietly leave the house
through the window.

The usual empty lot next to the taxi company.

Iida stands blocking my path.

"You snitched to the school, didn't you?"

"I didn't snitch."

"Liar!"

Tsujii kicks me in the side.

"Don't hit his face," Hoshino says.

A dull pain runs through my abdomen.

Iida is stomping on my bag.

Oh no, this is a problem. "Breathing" is in there. Iida opens
the bag and scatters the contents onto the ground. The CD
Walkman falls to the ground and shatters.

"Breathing" flies out and rolls away. Hoshino picks up the
CD and breaks it in two.

Iida shakes the bag even more. Lily Chou-Chou's photos scatter across the ground.

"What's with this guy, a Lily Chou-Chou fan?"
Tsujii says, looking disgusted.

Don't defile Lily.
Those who defile Lily deserve ten thousand deaths.
My whole body trembles with anger. But I can't do anything.
I can only crawl on the ground. Grasshoppers are carelessly mating in the grass right in front of me.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 9th (Fri) 11:53 PM
☐ Those who defile Lily deserve ten thousand deaths 2

"Take off your pants!"
After that, Hoshino and the others forced me to masturbate.
I had no choice but to obey. Someone spits on me. I don't know who because I'm looking down.

"Hey, you, pull back your foreskin!"
It's Tsujii's voice. I reluctantly obey.

"Do it so we can see properly!"
I straighten my back.

Tsujii scoops up sand and throws it hard at my lower body. I hold back screams each time. Iida imitates him and scoops up sand too. They're both doing it to me.
"Hey, put some effort into it!"

"Jerk off properly!"
Saying that, the two of them throw sand at me.

"Alright, one, two, three, four! Two, two, three, four! One, two, three, four! Two, two, three, four!"
They keep increasing the speed. I have to increase the speed of my stroking to match. If I fall behind, sand flies. Stones fly. Some of them are large stones.

"Hey, stop with the stones. You'll kill him," Hoshino says.
"He can just die," Iida says.

"Even if this guy dies, it won't be murder for us. We're minors, after all. Wahahahaha," Tsujii says.

Ah, am I going to be killed? I resign myself to it. Anything's fine now. There's no point in living after being forced to do something so pathetic. If you're going to kill me, just kill me.
.....But, why do I have to die for these guys?

《Posted by: Satie》 June 9th (Fri) 23:53
☐ Those who defile Lily deserve ten thousand deaths 3

"Let's go," Hoshino says. "This is gross."
Hoshino spits on my face.

They leave Tadano as a lookout to make sure I don't stop masturbating, and the three of them leave. Tadano is the lowest-ranking member of this group.

I silently continue stroking my penis.
 "Alright, that's enough. Go home."

"....."

I silently continue stroking my penis.

"I said that's enough! I don't want to see it anymore!"

I silently continue stroking my penis.

"It's disgusting! Stop it!"

Tadano kicks me in the stomach. He kicks me repeatedly. Weak-willed Tadano. Tadano who does whatever he's told. I'll forgive you, at least. But I'll never forgive Hoshino and the others. My bullying will probably only last until middle school anyway. But I'll never forgive these guys. Being unforgiven for life is much harder. Thinking that, I feel a little sorry for them. Poor things. But I won't forgive them. Those who defile Lily deserve ten thousand deaths. Tadano shoves me, and I fall to the ground. But I continue stroking my penis. I ejaculate in anger.

《Posted by: Satie》June 9th (Fri) 23:58
☐ Eclipse (Solar Eclipse)

"Breathing" has become an unexpected hit. It surpassed one million copies in two weeks since its release.

Also, the number of posts on the website increased dramatically during this period. The number of fans who said they were listening for the first time increased rapidly. They were people who didn't even know about ether. They repeatedly used the phrase "easy to listen to."

This infuriated the existing fans. A tense atmosphere filled the BBS. Eclipse, the proponent of ether fundamentalism, was a regular who idolized Lily more than anyone else. But even he rejected "Breathing." After writing a series of insults against Lily, he left the BBS.

"Lily, you have defiled ether. You have defiled yourself. It is impossible for ether to shine from your words again." Shortly after, a high school student in Tottori committed suicide.

"Lily, you have defiled ether. The eclipsed sun will never shine again." The eclipsed sun, that is, a solar eclipse, in other words, Eclipse. Was the high school student who committed suicide him? But I don't know.

Someone named Eclipse simply left the bulletin board, and fans who lost their ether suffocated. All because they listened to "Breathing." I'm fine. I won't lose sight of ether.

《Posted by: Satie》June 10th (Sat) 00:06

□ Shu Noda Incident 1

My sensitivity, which always has its antenna up for Lily Chou-Chou information, sometimes causes miracles bordering on extrasensory perception.

One Sunday, I went to a bookstore in town to look for the July issues of "OTO-JIRO," "AC-DC," and "SCUD." Then, I casually picked up and opened a gossip magazine that was on the shelf. It was a magazine I would normally never pick up. Why did I do such a thing?

It was the power of ether.

When I opened the page, Lily's and Shu Noda's faces were side by side in photos on the right and left. Following the headline "A Man Possessed by Ether" was the following text...

《Posted by: Satie》June 10th (Sat) 00:11

□ Shu Noda Incident 2

["Lily Chou-Chou, who once captivated Katsuhiko Kayama with love. Lily Chou-Chou, who even caused a fan to commit suicide after the release of 'Erotic.' Another incident has occurred around this mysterious artist.

Shu Noda (28 years old, photo left) has supported Lily Chou-Chou as an arranger since her solo debut, but on the 2nd of this month, he was referred to prosecutors for trespassing and assault at Lily's mansion. He had previously stalked Lily on her way home and peered into the windows of her apartment."

It has also come to light that he repeatedly engaged in abnormal behavior such as smashing things. After the disbandment of Philia, Shu Noda worked on film music, but he was unsuccessful.

"Well, just when things were looking completely bleak for him, he reunited with Lily. It's thanks to Lily that he managed to avoid ending his music career" (music critic Mr. K). In that sense, Lily was also his benefactor, so why did Shu Noda resort to such violence? During the recording of the new album "Breathing," he clashed with Lily over creative differences and was dismissed as producer. "Or rather, he stepped down himself. There was no bad blood in particular" (director Mr. F). This suggests the issue wasn't work-related. Lily's side has made no comment regarding this incident. When asked if there was a romantic relationship with Shu Noda, they replied, "That's not the case."

"She has a unique pheromone," says Katsuhiko Kayama, a former bandmate from Philia. "Shu Noda is quiet, but he has tremendous hidden energy. I always thought something like this might happen." Is it a love entanglement after all?

"Or rather, Lily wasn't interested. Noda is just an idiot," says Katsuhiko Kayama, who is rumored to be Lily's ex-boyfriend. There are rumors that Lily's side does not intend to press charges in this incident. Shu Noda also appears to be reflecting on his foolish actions during police questioning. Even so, what's frightening is the power of Lily Chou-Chou's pheromones. The album "Breathing," released last month, continues to dominate the charts.

However, immediately after its release, a high school student attempted suicide, and a message to Lily was left in their suicide note, which led some education groups to ask the record company to stop selling the record. Her magic seems to truly drive people mad.]

《Posted by: Satie》June 10th (Sat) 00:12

□ Shu Noda Incident 3

I trembled with anger. Not at Shu Noda. At the stupid magazine reporter who wrote this article. This guy has defiled Lily Chou-Chou. His crime is unforgivable. I wanted to buy up all the magazines on the spot and burn them all, but I couldn't, so I just bought one and left the store.

《Posted by: Satie》June 11th (Sun) 00:48

□ Love Hotel

After that, I staked out under the train tracks behind the station to snatch some purses. There wasn't a chance, so I went to a phone club instead.

I arranged a date with a college girl and went to a love hotel. The person who showed up at the meeting point, Ito-Yokado, looked like someone who hadn't played around much. These kinds of people usually stuff their wallets with extra cash as a precaution. We went to the hotel, and I had her take a shower first. While she was in there, I stole her wallet and quickly left the room.

That's the end of the job.

She probably won't report it to the police. She can't tell anyone she was robbed in a place like this. Returning the wallet is the bare minimum rule. If her student ID, driver's license, and credit cards are untouched, she'll give up more easily. I'm writing as if I'm quite used to this, but in reality, even this much made my heart feel like it was going to leap out of my throat. However, near the hotel exit, I encountered a scene that truly made my heart feel like it was going to leap out of my throat.

《Posted by: Satie》June 11th (Sun) 00:49

□ An Incident That Made My Heart Leap Out of My Throat

There was a couple receiving a key at the counter. One of them was none other than Hoshino. They hadn't noticed me. Next to Hoshino was Shiori Tsuda from our class. Could Hoshino be trying to scam her? But that's impossible. If he stole money from someone he knew, he'd be easily traced.

Maybe Hoshino doesn't know Shiori Tsuda? Maybe he doesn't realize she's a student from the same school? What an idiot. I imagined Shiori Tsuda grabbing his tail and giving Hoshino a fatal punishment, and I sincerely prayed that it would happen. But my prediction was wrong.

《Posted by: Satie》June 11th (Sun) 00:53

□ A New Job

A few days later, Hoshino called me out. It wasn't about money.

"Keep next Saturday free. Tadano will come pick you up."

Saturday.

Tadano came to my house looking uneasy. We headed to the station. Shiori Tsuda was at the station. Tadano gave Shiori Tsuda a slight nod. Shiori Tsuda took the gum out of her mouth, wrapped it in foil, and quickly went through the ticket gate. Tadano bought tickets and gave one to me.

We got on the train. Shiori Tsuda was in the next car. We kept this distance between us and Shiori Tsuda even after we arrived in the city. Having already seen her with Hoshino last Sunday, I was certain that Shiori Tsuda was already a member of Hoshino's group. I knew they were up to no good. But I had no idea what was actually going to happen. When we got to McDonald's, Shiori Tsuda started making a phone call on her cell phone.

Her face remained pale throughout.

"We just have to follow her," Tadano said.

Shiori Tsuda lingered over a milkshake for about twenty minutes. Then a middle-aged man arrived. Shiori Tsuda stood up. After talking to the man for a bit, she left the store. We followed them. Shiori Tsuda went into a hotel with the man. This was surely what is known as prostitution. I assumed so without any certainty.

I thought about it. A bitter taste welled up in my mouth, and I couldn't help but spit.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 11th (Sun) 00:55

□ Shiori Tsuda

Tadano sat down on the ground and started smoking a cigarette. He gave me one too. Since I didn't know how to smoke, I just lit it and watched it turn to ash.

"When she comes out, walk her home. Got it.?"

Tadano said.

I stayed silent.

"Hoshino took a video of her doing dirty stuff. Now she can't escape from him. He's going to suck her dry."

Tadano said, trying to act tough. But his voice lacked energy.

About an hour later, Shiori Tsuda came out alone. Tadano rushed over to her. Shiori Tsuda silently handed Tadano some money. Tadano gave half of it back to her.

"Hoshino told me to."

Shiori Tsuda silently accepted it.

Tadano whispered in my ear. "The rest is up to you."

When I looked back, Shiori Tsuda was already quite far ahead. Tadano nudged me in the back, and I followed after her.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 11th (Sun) 00:59

□ Hedge

Shiori Tsuda got on the train. She kept her head down the whole time. She went straight home. I watched her go into the house, but I wasn't sure if the job was over, so I loitered around for a while. I could hear the sound of water coming from behind the hedge.

《Posted by: Satie》June 11th (Sun) 01:05

□ Spray

I peeked through the hedge. Shiori Tsuda was holding a hose between her legs. She was washing between her legs in an ungainly posture.

(Why do this here? Do that in the bathroom!)

I started to feel pain in my chest, and I felt like I was going to throw up. While I was doing that, I accidentally made eye contact with Shiori Tsuda, and I hurriedly started walking away.

I could tell from the feeling behind me that Shiori Tsuda was running out onto the street.

"Hey!"

I stopped and turned around.

"At least answer me," she said.

"....."

"Quit making that sour face."

"....."

"You were peeking, weren't you?"

"....."

"Pervert!"

I started walking again. Shiori Tsuda chased after me. Then, from behind, she grabbed my crotch.

"You're getting hard."

"....."

《Posted by: Satie》June 11th (Sun) 01:07

□ Dog's Eyes

"Don't think you can get off for free just by peeking."

Shiori Tsuda grabbed my arm and dragged me into the shed in the courtyard. I didn't quite understand what was happening. The dog in the doghouse barked like a machine gun. "Dog's Eyes" popped into my head.

Lily Chou-Chou's "Dog's Eyes."

Dog's Eyes

Friday afternoon

Through the crack in the brick

It twists its neck and

A black dog

Comes to see me

Even if I throw stones

It doesn't bark

Even if I give it food
 It doesn't eat
 Red eyes are looking at me
 Hanging down its long tongue
 Dripping drool
 It's staring at the space between my legs
 This is a secret
 I won't tell anyone
 Saturday afternoon
 Inside my skirt
 It twists its neck and
 A black dog
 Breathes its beastly breath
 Onto me

《Posted by: Satie》 June 11th (Sun) 01:10

☐ Sex

Shiori Tsuda clung to my waist, unbuckled my belt, and pulled down my zipper.

"You've got a tiny dick."

Shiori Tsuda straddled me from above, pressing her crotch against mine.

Terror and disgust.

Something slimy.

I got goosebumps all over my body. I tried desperately to resist, but Shiori Tsuda's

nails were digging into my face. Shiori Tsuda was crying while shaking her hips violently. I know that girls make crying sounds when they have sex. But this was the first time I realized they actually cried. My penis had shrunk completely from fear, and it felt like it was being crushed against Shiori Tsuda's pelvic bone. I cried.

"Stop crying! Damn it!"

Shiori Tsuda also cried as she said this. Why do adults enjoy doing something so sad?

When we left the shed, it was completely dark. Shiori Tsuda paid me.

"Are you being used by Hoshino?"

"....."

"Here."

It was probably the money Shiori Tsuda had earned that day. Lily Chou-Chou's "Dog's Eyes" was still playing in my head.

学校という繭の中で、

Within the cocoon that is school,

期限切れの蛹はもう眠れない。

The expired pupa can no longer sleep.

疾走と迷走の果てに、

At the end of a wild run and a lost run,

ひとりの王様が生まれた。

A lone king was born.

繭の中の王。それが星野だった。

A king within the cocoon. That was Hoshino.

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Chapter 10: Erotic



夢の中に入りこんだ イメージのかけらから
あなたが欲しがってるものを 探し出してる

紅茶の中に映ってる 曇った空のグレイ
あなたが持ち上げて行って 昼に溶けてた

好きなのはあなたの全てじゃなくて
風のような 傷跡のような 海の響きのような エロティック

気のない素振りで弾いてる スケール(音階)の間から
音なのか音楽なのか 聞こえ始める

その指で何気なく弾くメロディー 始めから
そこにあるラインなぞるように 奏でる

死んだような街に 響くのは明日のレクイエム
生きていたいと 想わなくても...

私が欲しがってるものを 探し出してよ

その指で何気なく弾くメロディー 始めから
そこにあるラインなぞるように 奏でる
好きなのはあなたの全てじゃなくて
風のような 傷跡のような 海の響きのような エロティック

From fragments of images that slipped into a dream
I'm searching for what you desire

The gray of the cloudy sky reflected in the tea
You lifted it up and it melted into the afternoon

What I like isn't everything about you
Erotic, like the wind, like scars, like the sound of the sea

From between the musical scales you play with an indifferent air
I begin to hear whether it's a sound or music

The melody you play casually with those fingers, from the beginning
You play as if tracing a line that's already there
What echoes in the dead-like town is tomorrow's requiem
Even if I don't think I want to live...

Please find what I desire

The melody you play casually with those fingers, from the beginning
You play as if tracing a line that's already there
What I like isn't everything about you
Like the wind, like scars, like the sound of the sea, Erotic

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Mon) 03:57

☐ My Old School

If you divide the students of K Junior High by their elementary school of origin, they can be categorized into K Elementary, South K Elementary, and F Elementary.

I'm from South K Elementary.

South K Elementary was originally a branch school that separated from K Elementary about twenty years ago, but it was re-merged right after I graduated. My juniors now consider K Elementary their alma mater, and South K Elementary is now a ruined building. In a few years, it might disappear completely. That would be sad, but an alma mater that's been left as a ruin, exposing its carcass, might also be unbearable to look at.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Mon) 04:00

☐ Human Relationships

When we first entered junior high, everyone hung out with students from the same elementary school. We were wary of students from other schools we weren't used to seeing, and we were strangely bound by promises between friends. For the week or two before clubs started and we didn't have after-school activities, we rode our bikes in groups back and forth on the unfamiliar commute. Proudly wearing our unfamiliar uniforms, we pedaled as hard as we could. Even though we were junior high students, we were still just elementary schoolers on the inside. But before we knew it, those old relationships were erased as if with an eraser,

and completely different relationships had formed. Ultimately, these are shallow relationships swayed by the environment. It hasn't changed much since elementary school. They don't exist. If classes change, human relationships are completely reset from the initial settings. Things like friendship, bonds, or something connected at the heart, as often seen in movies and TV dramas - do those things really exist in reality? So far, I haven't seen such human relationships.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 04:01

☐ Valedictorian Address

Hoshino was from F Elementary School and was the student who gave the valedictorian address as the first-year representative. Therefore, his first impression was striking. After the entrance ceremony ended, the students moved to their respective classrooms. I was in class 1-2. Hoshino was in that classroom. Hoshino was teased by his classmates from F Elementary School, like, "You were so nervous," and acted embarrassed. Apparently, Hoshino had served as the student council president in elementary school. I remember that caused some minor controversy. Why was he chosen when there were also student council presidents from our elementary school and K Elementary School? Why wasn't our student council president chosen? Why F Elementary School? Isn't that school discrimination? Students from other schools, who didn't know this student's face, didn't easily recognize him as their representative. But somewhere, they had to acknowledge him. Hoshino had that kind of presence. With this striking debut, Hoshino was recognized as a special presence in the class.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 04:03

☐ Election

The class committee election was conducted by recommendation. It's a situation where even faces and names don't match, let alone being told to write names on ballots all of a sudden. The election itself wouldn't work. First, candidates are selected by recommendation through raising hands. Aoki Kunifusa and Aizawa Reina were made to serve as chairperson and secretary simply because they had the first attendance numbers.

"Anyone? Anyone?"

Aoki Kunifusa continues to say so monotonously in a languid voice.

"Anyone? Anyone?"

Few people raise their hands eagerly on the first day.

"Hey, we can't go home unless someone recommends someone!" Homeroom teacher Hamada threatens.

Reluctantly, some people raise their hands.

"I think Hoshino Shusuke would be good."

"I think Sasaki Kentaro would be good."

Two boys and two girls are chosen from the students selected in this way and their names are written on the ballots. Naturally, Hoshino was chosen as the male class committee member. The runner-up was Sasaki Kentaro from K Elementary School, but he only got six votes.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 04:05

☐ Marathon Race

I don't mean to brag, but I won third place in the May marathon race. I'm just saying I had nothing but running as a talent. No, yeah, this is bragging after all. Isn't it okay to have at least one thing to brag about? In my case, it was my legs. When I remember that marathon race, I feel strangely refreshed.

I feel like the me back then was like brand-new shoes without any mud on them. In the latter half, I had a fierce dead heat with Murakami from the baseball team.

I remember it being extremely annoying because Murakami kept singing the song "Run, run, us" in a small voice on an endless loop. I also remember almost dying from the intense stench of fertilizer along the way.

..... I also remember the sky being bright blue.

I could see the back of the student running solo in first place far in the distance. I remember that back slowly getting smaller. That was Hoshino. Murakami and I crossed the finish line almost simultaneously and both fell onto the ground. Murakami was one body ahead. Hoshino came over and said to Murakami, who was not even out of breath,

"Oh! That was close! I almost got passed!"

Murakami was from the same F Elementary School as Hoshino. When Hoshino left, he clicked his tongue.

"Damn it. Should a person like that even exist!"

Of course, he was talking about Hoshino.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:08

☐ Mr. Perfect

In dramas, you often see scenes where test scores and rankings are posted, and students are either happy or sad. In our school's case, the midterm test scores and rankings are not publicly released. However, for some reason, that information leaks. Students were always aware of the top-ranking students' positions. Apparently, Hoshino was number one in the first midterm exam. He denied it shyly, but this raised his standing even further. It was safe to say he was now in a runaway lead. First place in the marathon, first place in the midterm exam, a clear winner in both. On top of that, he was apparently also first in the personality test we were forced to take during the temporary school day in the spring break before entering school. He's good at socializing, and he's good at making people laugh. A flawless guy. Mr. Perfect. That was Hoshino.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:11

☐ Track and Field Club

I, who had nothing but running as a talent, joined the track and field club. Hoshino was there too. If we hadn't been in the same track and field club, even if we had been in the same class, we probably wouldn't have had much of a connection. I shouldn't have joined the track and field club. Looking back now, that was the turning point of fate. But back then, the fact that Hoshino was in the same club made me feel strangely happy and strangely

proud too. I also thought, "I'd like to become friends with him if possible." At that time, there were eight first-year members in the club, both boys and girls combined. Of those, five were boys: Terawaki Hitoshi, Shimizu Kyota, Nakagai Hirokazu, and then Hoshino. And me.

The three girls were shameless individuals who joined the club because they were after the club president, senior Ikeda. No matter how talented Hoshino was, he couldn't compete with the upperclassmen who were a size bigger. Among them, senior Ikeda, the club president, was outstanding. While our classmates were jealous of the talented Hoshino during physical education classes, I saw Hoshino repeatedly lose to the seniors in track practice. As expected, even the local hero of the first-years was just an ordinary member during club activities. Looking back now, it's only natural. After all, both he and I were just elementary school students carrying backpacks until a month ago.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:14

☐ Shameless Individuals

Those shameless female club members were openly chasing after senior Ikeda. It was as if they mistook him for a Johnny's talent or something. Senior Ikeda was extremely troubled. It was pitiful to see him losing energy day by day. One day, Hoshino and I were told by the seniors to somehow get rid of those three.

After practice, we caught them and talked to them behind the club room.

"You understand that the seniors are troubled, right? We're also troubled."

"We're not here to play. If you're not serious about doing this, you'll have to quit." Hoshino was blunt. But instead of being intimidated, the three shameless girls turned the tables and launched a fierce counterattack.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:15
☐ The Shameless Girls' Counterattack

Who do you think you are?
 Why do we have to be told that by you?
 Do you have the right to make us quit?
 What do you mean by interfering with practice?
 We're not interfering with practice.
 Don't you understand we're doing this properly?
 Are you jealous?
 Are you interested in one of us?
 Do you like senior Ikeda?
 Are you gay?
 Are you a transvestite?
 Pervert!
 Don't you think you're so popular?
 Did you know almost everyone in school hates you?
 You're so annoying! Your very existence!
 Just because you won the marathon doesn't mean you can get cocky!

Don't get cocky just because you're smart!
 Don't act like a star just because you gave the valedictorian address!

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:19
☐ Victory of the Shameless Ones

During that time, Hoshino was moving his mouth vertically and horizontally, seemingly trying to find a way to counterattack, but in the end, he didn't say a word and was just unilaterally insulted, and that was the end of it. Even after the shameless girls left, Hoshino didn't move an inch and just stood there frozen. When I tried to call out to him, he interrupted me and said quietly, "It's not like I wanted to give the valedictorian address."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:19
☐ Ramen

However, those shameless girls couldn't stay in the club forever. It's unclear whether they got tired of the tough practice or got bored of senior Ikeda, but they eventually stopped showing up. Senior Ikeda mistakenly thought it was thanks to Hoshino and me, and treated us to ramen after school one Saturday. It wasn't necessarily because of that, but even now when I think about it, senior Ikeda was a good person.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 12th (Monday) 04:21

☐ Hoshino's House

After parting with the senior, Hoshino invited me to his house. It was a big and beautiful house, just like I'd expect from Hoshino. His mother was also beautiful. She was overjoyed that he had brought a friend over.

"Why don't you have dinner with us?"

"Ah, we just had ramen."

"You can still eat, right? It's okay."

In the end, Hoshino and I quickly devoured a full-course dinner. Then we played PlayStation, and before we knew it, it was past ten o'clock.

"Why don't you stay over? Tomorrow's Sunday."

Hoshino said. His mother also told me to stay.

"Ah, no..."

"I can call your house for you."

"Ah, no, I'll go home."

However, in the end, I couldn't refuse and ended up staying.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 04:22

☐ Bath

Hoshino's house's bath was amazing.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 04:23

☐ Star Talk

I was put to sleep in Hoshino's bed.

Hoshino laid out a futon on the floor and slept there.

We talked until very late at night.

We talked about how Michael Johnson's running style is more suitable for the Japanese physique than Maurice Greene's, then moved on to whether doping really makes you run faster, then to how Komodo dragons, large lizards, have completely different amounts of hemoglobin in their blood, allowing them to run for hours, then to how humans are slow runners but excellent walkers compared to other mammals, then to how dinosaurs went extinct due to a giant meteorite, then to how the universe began with the Big Bang, and finally to whether aliens exist. That's when I said:

"You know, you seem like an alien. You can do anything."

"Everyone misunderstands."

"About what?"

"I'm not that smart."

"What are you talking about? You're the top of the class!"

"No, I was seventh. Being number one is a lie."

The specific number seven had a strange sense of reality.

"Rumors are scary. What was it? You were number one in the personality test, right? Think about it. There's no such thing as being number one in personality."

Is that how it is? What Hoshino said was strangely convincing.

"No one understands me."

Hoshino said that with dissatisfaction.

"No, but even seventh place is pretty amazing, right?"

"Then I wish they would say seventh place. Why number one? I'm telling them I'm not. The real number one probably thinks I'm lying. I might be called 'liar Hoshino' behind my back."

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 23:53

☐ Prefectural Tournament

June, the rainy season.

It's the season for the prefectural tournament. Classes are legally suspended, and we go to cheer for the seniors. The cheering for the track and field club was sparse. Since the seniors' events were over in the morning, we first-year track and field club members ate yakisoba bread at the stadium's concession stand, and then went to cheer for the judo team in the afternoon. The judo team was easily eliminated in the preliminaries. Next, we went to cheer for the baseball team. As expected of the baseball team. A large number of students had gathered at the stadium. Someone from our school was heckling the opposing team from the front row of the stands.

Hey, hey! Look at that number five on his back! Turn around a little! Let us see your face! Please! Hey! We definitely won't tell! You look like Harada from Neptune! Thanks to that, our cheering section burst into laughter every time number five's face was visible. When the third inning ended, it started to rain. It quickly became a heavy downpour.

It started to rain. In the top of the sixth inning, our cleanup hitter hit a fly ball that the opposing team's center fielder missed due to slipping in the mud. During that time, two runners scored, giving us a 4-3 comeback lead. However, the game was called due to the rain. Even though we had taken the lead, we lost the game. Since the bottom of the inning didn't happen, the runs scored in the top of the sixth were nullified.

《Posted by: Satie》June 12th (Monday) 23:57

☐ Bus

The bus ride home was crowded with soaking wet junior high school students. Hoshino was next to me. Behind us were Terawaki, Shimizu, and Nakagai. On the opposite side of Hoshino, near my left shoulder, a girl was being crushed. I wanted to make room for her, but there was nothing I could do. The bus was so packed that no one could move.

"What's wrong?"

Hoshino asked.

"Huh? What do you mean?"

I was startled. I wondered if I had made some strange face. Perhaps I had.

《Posted by: Satie》June 13th (Tuesday) 00:00

☐ Girl

When the bus arrived at the station, we were all pushed out at once. It was still pouring rain, and we all rushed into the station.

"Rushing straight ahead..." If that means not looking to the side, then it's a bit of a mistake. While running, I was glancing to the side, chasing after the girl from earlier. While doing so, I passed Hoshino, Terawaki, and the others, and jumped into the station first. I managed to get a chance to look back for a moment.

"What are you getting so serious for, idiot!"
Hoshino jumped in second, saying that.
Shimizu came in third, followed by Terawaki and Nakagai.

"Yes! First place!"
I raised my fist in a victory pose. Then the girl from earlier jumped in. She brushed her hair back. Her face was clearly etched in my mind.

"What do you mean, first place?"
Hoshino lightly punched me in the side. I instinctively reacted exaggeratedly. I arched my back and kicked Hoshino. Hoshino almost bumped into the girl, and I gasped. That was unexpected. The girl gasped and looked at Hoshino. Hoshino also looked at her.

"Oh."

"Ah."
The voices that escaped from Hoshino's mouth and the girl's mouth overlapped. She averted her gaze, moved aside, and passed right by me.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 13th (Tuesday) 00:01
□ Kuno?

After thoroughly enjoying the sight of her leaving, after she was completely out of sight, I finally confessed to everyone.
"Hey, wasn't that girl just now super cute?"
Shimizu and the others looked around, saying, "Huh?"
"Ah, it's Kuno." Hoshino reacted with a calm face.
"Kuno?" I turned pale.

"Kuno? Kuno what? What's your relationship with her?"
Terawaki asked.

"What's that? We don't have any relationship."
Hoshino looked annoyed.
"Kuno what?" Shimizu asked.
"Kanda Kuno?"
"Haha, that's Uno!" Nakagai said.
"Idiot. It's her last name. Kuno is from class one."
"What's Kuno's first name?"
"Kuno... I don't know."
"He says he doesn't know! He's a liar!"

Terawaki and the others teased Hoshino relentlessly. You rarely see scenes like this in our class. In class, he's Mr. Perfect. In the club, he's just a regular member. Knowing that,

he's surprisingly easy to talk to in the classroom as Mr. Perfect, I was strangely nervous around Hoshino in the club. Especially when I was with Terawaki and the others, it was painful. For me, Hoshino wasn't as perfect as the guys in class thought, but he also wasn't just a regular friend like Terawaki and the others thought.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 13th (Tuesday) 00:02

□ Yoko Kuno

I checked the roster after I got home. Her name was Yoko Kuno. She was from T Elementary School. It was a school I had never heard of. I had assumed she was from the same elementary school as Hoshino. If not, how did Hoshino know her? It bothered me a little, but I didn't think about it too deeply at the time.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 13th (Tuesday) 00:05

□ Second Day of the Prefectural Tournament

Since there was no track and field competition the next day, I went to cheer for the basketball team. I don't remember the results of the game. I definitely watched it, but I have no memory of it at all. All I remember about that day is Hoshino being harassed by students from another school. They were wearing green uniforms I had never seen before.

Hey! Hoshino! What are you doing here!
If you're loitering around here, you'll get bullied again!

What are you staring at?!
Don't look at us! I'll hit you! Hahahaha!
Hey, don't look away! Gahahaha!

We tried to shield Hoshino, but we didn't have the courage to say anything back to them face-to-face, so we retorted in a low voice.

"What's with those guys?"

"They're wearing such lame uniforms."

"Can I punch them a little?"

Hoshino said, "Just ignore them," and tried to leave. At that moment, someone from the other side threw a basketball that hit Hoshino directly in the head.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 13th (Tuesday) 00:08

□ Green Uniforms

Gahahaha! Lame Hoshino!
Don't be so slow.
You're an eyesore. Get lost, idiot!

Shimizu, who was always quick-tempered, snapped. He picked up the ball and threw it back. The other guys' expressions changed, and they approached us, shaking their shoulders as if to say, "What, you wanna fight?" The guy who got hit with the ball and Shimizu got face-to-face, about ten centimeters apart, and started cursing at each other in low voices.

What the hell, you wanna go?
Shut up! You bastard.
What's with this shrimp?

What the hell?!
 Got a problem, asshole?!
 Yeah, I got a problem, jerk!
 Don't screw with me.
 Don't screw with me.
 You wanna go?!
 Shut up, bastard!
 Shorty.
 What the hell?!
 Got a problem, asshole?!
 Yeah, I got a problem, jerk!
 Don't screw with me.
 Don't screw with me.
 Tch! (Spit)
 Tch! (Spit)
 Ptooey! (Spit)
 Ptooey! (Spit)

《Posted by: Satie》 June 13th (Tue) 00:10

☐ The Hero's Past

In the end, the two just threatened each other, and it didn't escalate into anything serious. The green-skinned guys glared at us as they left. Hoshino was deathly pale.

I wonder if he transferred because he was bullied?
 Nah, probably his parents' circumstances.
 But it's good he was able to transfer, huh?
 He's had a meteoric rise since then.
 He was the student council president, right?
 We exchanged various speculations in Hoshino's absence. It wasn't exactly backbiting. Everyone was strangely shocked that he had been bullied. As for me, I felt strangely sorry for that beautiful mother of his. The thought of her being heartbroken over it weighed heavily on me.

"When I went to his house to play, his mom gave us tons of good food. I wonder if her being so nice to us was because of the bullying?"

I was taken aback. It was Shimizu who said that.

"Well, let's keep this a secret."

No one disagreed with Terawaki's suggestion.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 01:56

☐ New Structure and Summer Intensive Training

After the inter-high tournament ended, the third-year students retired from the club. Lead by the new club president, Kanda, and the second-year students.

An extremely strict new structure was established. The outrageous slogan of aiming for the national tournament next year was put forward, and morning practice was to be held every day. It was the price of Kanda-senpai's regret and resentment. Kanda-senpai, who had participated in the 400-meter race in his second year, broke through the preliminaries in second place, but was forced to withdraw from the finals due to a muscle tear. It was understandable that he was burning with revenge, but the national tournament seemed to be a completely different world. However, Kanda-senpai was serious. Even the advisor, Ekinuma, was beyond impressed and half-dumbfounded. "Going too far is not good."

Even when Ekinuma tried to restrain him, Kanda-senpai, who was completely absorbed, would not listen. Every time a club member was about to faint from the intense practice, Kanda-senpai repeated the words, "Super recovery!" It seems that the body, which has been damaged by extremely harsh training, will level up more than ever when it recovers next time. This is called "super recovery." I thought that getting stronger through harsh training was only in the world of manga, but it seems that such a thing actually exists. However, reality was not as easy as in manga. We were just exhausted, and our records didn't improve at all. Among them, only Hoshino gained strength like in a manga.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 01:58

☐ Travel Plans

That summer, spent immersed in club activities, felt strangely long. The "Summer Intensive Training" came to be called "Hell's Intensive Training," and then further shortened to "Hell Training." This event continued until August 13th. However, thankfully, there was a break for Obon. The school gate wouldn't open. We were sincerely grateful for Japan's ancient traditions.

August 13th.

We did our best aiming for this day. We had no choice but to do our best. On the way back from tough practice, it became a daily routine to stop by the nearby convenience store and eat ice cream. There, while browsing travel magazines, we came up with a travel plan. Visiting graves was ridiculous, and since we had a rare break, we decided to go somewhere far away.

How about Okinawa? Coral reefs. Southern islands. The sound of that made everyone's eyes light up. Suddenly, having found an exciting goal, we were able to endure the Hell Training by just imagining it. Gradually, August 13th was approaching. However, there was one problem. It was our funds.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 02:00

☐ Plan to Raise Funds

I really don't want to ask my parents for money.
 Begging my parents feels childish.
 They'd hold it over my head forever.
 Besides, they'd probably say no. "What do you mean,
 Okinawa?"

"You're a hundred years too early."
 "Just go to the public pool."

But we need money.
 Isn't there anything?
 Our special skills.
 Running.
 Feet.
 Physical labor.
 Newspaper delivery.
 Milk delivery.
 That's a pain.
 Snatching purses.
 That's a crime.

The total of everyone's savings right now is 65,000 yen.
 Lame!
 A little over 10,000 yen each.
 We can only go somewhere with a 5,000 yen one-way
 ticket.

What southern islands?
 What coral reefs?

Where can we go with a 5,000 yen one-way ticket?
 I guess we have no choice but to rely on our parents.
 We'll just have to sponge off them.
 That's what parents are for, right?
 Should we snatch money from our parents?
 Or threaten them?

Wait a minute. Where can we go with a 5,000 yen one-way
 ticket?
 We can go to Tokyo.
 Should we snatch money in Tokyo?
 From who?
 From...some suckers.
 I see. Tokyo might be good because we won't stand out.
 What if we can't snatch anything? Our whole fortune will be
 gone. Then we'll storm a TV station and barricade ourselves
 in. What's that supposed to mean?
 We'll get on TV.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 02:02

□ Tokyo - Akihabara

And then came the Obon holiday.
 We put our plan into action.
 Tokyo. Especially a place with a lot of easy target.
 A place with a lot of slow-moving people.

Akihabara!

Why?

There are a lot of otaku there.

Otaku? That's a low hanging fruit!

Plus, if they're carrying electronics, they can't chase us, right? Yeah, I saw it on TV. It seems to be quite popular.

Akihabara. They say otaku will just hand over money if you tell them to.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 02:03

☐ Otaku Hunting

We went to Akihabara. And we scouted out otaku who looked like they had money. We found an otaku carrying shopping bags in both hands. We followed him from a distance. However, just as we entered the parking lot, another group surrounded him first. They were high school students who looked very bad. Sure enough, the otaku was terrified and paid them money obediently with a faint smile. However, in addition to his wallet, he had a large sum of money hidden in a bank envelope in his back pocket. The high school students were overjoyed. We stamped our feet in frustration. The group of high school students, after receiving the money, even spit on the otaku who gave it to them.

What a bunch of scumbags!

Shimizu said, completely ignoring our own behavior.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 02:05

☐ Hunting the Otaku Hunters

The group passed in front of us. We pretended not to notice. One of them was counting the bills he had just gotten. It was a huge amount. Then it happened suddenly. Hoshino, who was next to me, charged towards the group. As he passed them, he snatched the envelope of bills and ran. Naturally, the group chased after him. Hoshino led them on a near-lap around the parking lot, then ran towards us. We hurriedly ran in the opposite direction. Looking back, Hoshino was already running right behind me. He was laughing.

The high schoolers were running behind him, but they were already quite far behind. They were running with their knees barely lifting. It was only a matter of time before they gave up. We could still run with ease. Soon, they were unable to run and started walking. There was no way they could compete with us, who had endured the hellish training. It turned out that the "super recovery" effect that Kanda-senpai talked about was demonstrated in an unexpected way.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 02:07

☐ Alibaba's Law

We took the train and headed home immediately.

We won't be going to Tokyo for a while, Terawaki said.

The guilt of getting our hands dirty was taking its toll.

The guilt hit us like a body blow. We found ourselves unusually quiet.

"Is it good or bad to steal money from thieves?"
Hoshino posed this riddle. Everyone suddenly started talking at once.

It's good, right?
Yeah, if we hadn't done it, it would have been theirs.
Right, right. The otaku wouldn't have been able to rest in peace. We got revenge for the otaku. They should be thanking us. If we return the money, they really will thank us. But then we can't go to Okinawa.

"Alibaba did the same thing, right? Stole treasure from thieves."
"Oh yeah, that's right! And he became super rich, right?"
"Was that how the story went?"
"What was it? Who's Alibaba?"
"Open sesame, right?"
"Why sesame?"

And then, suddenly, silence fell again. The guilt hit us like a body blow. There was nearly a million yen in the envelope.

If we go to Okinawa with this, we'll get caught.

By who?
Our parents.

Certainly, that's true.

In the end, we decided to ask our parents for travel expenses. While the difficulty varied, everyone ultimately got permission. We sponged off our parents to get the funds. We should have just done that from the beginning. Hoshino ended up holding onto the money we got from the robbery.

《Posted by: Satie》June 14th (Wed) 02:10

□ Iriomote Island

Iriomote Island. Why did we choose this island? Because it has Iriomote wildcats. That was the only reason. We can swim and see Iriomote wildcats. Though it's not like we desperately wanted to see Iriomote wildcats.

As you can see from the map, there are countless islands around there. Okinawa Island, Okinoerabu Island, Yoron Island, Kume Island, Miyako Island, Ishigaki Island, Taketomi Island, Iriomote Island, Yonaguni Island... When we had to choose from among them, we didn't know what criteria to use, so we just chose based on the Iriomote wildcats.

《Posted by: Satie》June 14th (Wed) 22:32

□ Wildcat Inn

When we arrived on the island, we went to an inn called "Wildcat Inn." It was a white, slightly girly, pension-style inn. Most of the staff were female college students or freelancers from all over the country. They were all wearing matching yellow T-shirts, making them look like volunteers from a 24-hour charity TV show.

They looked like volunteers. Even the old lady who seemed to be the owner of the inn was wearing the same yellow T-shirt. Because she had thick black hair, I didn't realize she was old until she turned around. When she turned around right in front of me, I almost screamed.

There was a beach called Star Sand Beach right near Wildcat Inn. When we went there, the small beach was crowded with tourists. We spent the afternoon there, tanning and swimming a little. At night, we killed time watching TV and playing cards. Shimizu and Terawaki, however, went out to try and pick up some cute volunteers from the 24-hour charity TV show. They didn't seem to have any luck picking anyone up, but they did gather some inside information.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:34

□ Hidden Gem

There are almost no tourists in the area from the western tip of the island to the south because there are no real roads there. Local boat operators offer special trips to that area, so you can enjoy a hidden paradise if you take one of those trips. You might even see a wildcat.

That alone made our hearts race.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:35

[Translator Note: “Maru” is a common suffix for Japanese ship names, often used for civilian or merchant vessels.]

□ Wildcat Sea Cruise

The next morning, we visited a local boat operator and chartered a boat. The name of the shop was "Wildcat Sea Cruise." The owner of the shop was an old man with a face that looked just like Okinawa's famous Shisa lion statues. Just before departure, a young solo traveler came to the shop. Shisa asked us if it was okay for him to share the ride. We felt that since we had made the reservation first, we didn't want to share, but when the young man said he would pay the entire fee, the situation turned into a super lucky deal for us.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:38

□ Speed-san

When we went to the pier, there was a boat that said "Wildcat Maru No. 3."

We thought Shisa would be the one steering, but a young woman was at the helm. She was tanned dark, but beautiful. Her name tag said "Shimabukuro," so we decided to secretly call her "Speed-san."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:40

□ Tokyo University Student and Middle Schoolers

Speed-san asked the young man,
 "What do you do for a living?"
 "Huh? Me? Haha! I'm a student. A university student."
 "Which university?"

"Tokyo University."
 "Wow! Amazing!"
 "Not really. Not at all."
 "Are you traveling alone?"
 "Yeah. It's easier alone."

Speed-san then asked us our ages.

"Eighteen."
 "Seventeen."
 "Eighteen."
 "Eighteen."
 "Seventeen."
 "No way! You look younger! High schoolers?"
 "Twelve."
 "Thirteen."
 "Thirteen."
 "Twelve."
 "Twelve."
 "Middle schoolers?"
 "First year of middle school."
 "First year of middle school?! What?! You were elementary schoolers until last year?"
 "Yeah, until six months ago."

This surprised not only Speed-san but also the Tokyo University student.

"Wow! It's amazing that you're in Iriomote at that age. I never traveled at your age."

"I never even thought about traveling at your age. You boys have a promising future!"

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:41

☐ Shisa's Role

Shisa's job was to talk about the names of the islands around here, their origins, stories of the gods, and sing island songs. However, he spoke in a dialect that sounded like a foreign language, so Speed-san had to translate every time. On top of that, the engine noise was so loud that it was almost impossible to hear anything.

Shisa, sitting at the bow of the boat, would say something. Then Speed-san, steering at the stern, would translate. There's no way Speed-san could hear Shisa's voice. It must be a daily routine, so she understands without listening. If that's the case, Speed-san could just tell us everything from the beginning, but that would probably lack the "atmosphere." We didn't care about the atmosphere.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:45

☐ Wildcat

The boat sailed through the intricate terrain of the island. The western side of the island looks like Godzilla's fingers on a map. As we entered the gaps between those fingers, we were surrounded by mountains on three sides, and it felt more like a lake than the sea. As we went further in, the width between the left and right sides gradually narrowed.

then it becomes like the Amazon jungle. Further ahead, it was a dead end, and a waterfall was falling from the rocks. It was truly a hidden paradise. We looked intently at the dense forest, desperately searching for the Iriomote wildcat. The Tokyo University student, watching us, said,

"Hey, everyone. Are you looking for the wildcat?"
When we nodded, the Tokyo University student burst out laughing.

"They're extremely rare. Besides, they're nocturnal."
Speed-san nodded and said,

"I've never seen one myself."
We were deeply disappointed. If Speed-san hasn't seen one, there's no way we, who just arrived today, would find one.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:46
☐ Gorilla

The boat made a U-turn and headed back out to sea.
"You'll rarely see a wildcat, but you can see a gorilla right away."
We listened to Speed-san's joke with blank faces. It was written in the guidebook. One of the cliffs looked exactly like a gorilla's profile and was called Gorilla Rock.

The boat stopped near it.

"The coral around here is beautiful. Do you want to try snorkeling?"

We and the Tokyo University student put on our snorkels and entered the sea.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:47
☐ Coral Reef

We peered into the sea through our goggles.
Wow, amazing! Amazing!
We cheered.
Then we peered into the sea again.
We could see round coral like tables.
Fish were swimming.
We could only hear our own breathing.
Before we knew it, we had forgotten about our friends.
An hour or two passed in the blink of an eye.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:48
☐ On the Boat

When we got a little tired, we rested on the coral. Even far out at sea, there were coral resting spots. When we stood on them, the surface of the sea was about chest height. When I tried to dive back into the sea headfirst, my chest was scraped by the coral. I climbed back onto the boat.

The Tokyo University student was smiling and talking to Speed-san on the deck.

"Excuse me, I got injured."

Speed-san looked at my chest and said, "Oh my, oh my," as she brought a first-aid kit. Then she applied some ointment. "Just rest for a bit."

I took off my fins and put on a T-shirt.

"How was it? Was it fun?"

The Tokyo University student asked.

"Yes."

"Right? Was it your first time?"

"Yes."

"Then it must have been fun."

"Um, aren't you going to swim?"

"I am swimming. You have to take breaks, otherwise you'll get sunburn and won't be able to sleep at night."

The fair-skinned Tokyo University student patted his slightly reddened back.

《Posted by: Satie》June 14th (Wed) 22:49

□ About Habu Snakes, etc.

"Anyway..."

The Tokyo University student caught Speed-san again and started talking to her.

"I've heard the habu snakes around here are smaller and less venomous than the ones on the main island, is that right?"

"That's right."

"Can you die from a habu snake bite?"

"If you suck the venom out quickly, you'll be fine."

"Oh! Then if I get bitten, please do that for me."

"Huh?"

"No, please suck out the venom. Hahahaha."

"There are no habu snakes in the sea."

"I know that. Hahahaha!"

I stayed quietly on the boat for a while, but I felt uneasy for some reason. I chugged some barley tea and jumped back into the sea. I kicked my fins and swam vigorously towards the deeper part of the sea. Shimizu and the others were near the boundary where the coral ended.

They were making a fuss saying they saw a turtle. Unfortunately, I didn't get to see it.

《Posted by: Satie》June 14th (Wed) 22:50

□ Bitter Melon

We had lunch at a nearby beach.

The lunchboxes contained a bitter vegetable called goya (bitter melon), which made everyone grimace. Hoshino said he couldn't stand the smell and barely touched his food. Shimizu and Nakagai finished what he didn't eat. After lunch, Hoshino immediately ran back into the sea with his snorkel.

I played beach volleyball with Shimizu and Speed-san. The Tokyo University student was picking up shells by himself, and Shisa was smoking a cigarette on the boat.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:52

☐ Crisis

Before long, Hoshino came back. He was snorkeling face down near the shoreline. Was he looking at the sand? That's how he looked. The moment a strange feeling of unease crossed my mind,

"What are you doing? What's that?"

Speed-san said, running towards Hoshino.

Hoshino had been swept there while drowning.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 14th (Wed) 22:53

☐ Artificial Respiration

Speed-san began administering first aid. It was the first time in my life that I had seen CPR performed in front of me. I had seen mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in dramas, but there was no romantic mood whatsoever. Speed-san pinched Hoshino's nose, forcefully tilted his head back, put her mouth to his as if biting him, and forcefully blew air into his mouth. It was like inflating a float. After repeating this four or five times, Hoshino suddenly vomited. He spewed seawater everywhere. Then he opened his eyes wide. He was stunned for a moment, but then had a strangely refreshed look.

"Are you okay?"

We repeatedly called out to Hoshino, but there was no response. He just looked up at the sky with strangely clear eyes.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 15th (Thu) 22:21

☐ Island Lore

On the boat ride back, everyone was incredibly depressed.

"You must have brought something bad to the island,"

Shisa said through Speed-san's translation.

For some reason, the Tokyo University student said cheerfully, "Maybe the island's god is angry."

Speed-san added in her own words, "But if they really hated you, you wouldn't be alive."

Being told about gods over and over by the adults, we were completely terrified.

Are there really gods? We didn't do anything!

Should we have a purification ritual?

How do you even do a purification ritual?

Seeing us completely serious, the three adults burst into laughter.

"Don't worry. You just got anemia from swimming without eating lunch, right?" Speed-san said.

Meanwhile, Hoshino was still staring blankly, as if looking at something far away.

The excessively blue sky.

The blue sea.
I felt a chill down my spine.

《Posted by: Satie》June 15th (Thu) 22:25
□ Tokyo University Student

As soon as we landed, we regained our energy.
The Tokyo University student gave us a ride back.
It was a rental car he borrowed on the island.
Since we were one person over the capacity, the smallest one, Nakagai, squeezed into the space under the back seat.

"Where are you guys staying?"
"Wildcat Inn."
"Typical. Wildcat Sea Cruise, Wildcat Inn, Wildcat Hotel, Wildcat Rental Car, Wildcat Restaurant."

Shimizu, Terawaki, and I burst into laughter when we heard that. Nakagai, who was crouching down, groaned as his stomach was kicked, and seeing that, we laughed even harder. Hoshino was staring at the sea from the passenger seat.

"Well then, maybe I'll stay there too," the Tokyo University student said.

"That's great! They say traveling together is the best!" Shimizu said smoothly.
In reality, we just thought it would be convenient to have a car.

But Wildcat Inn was full and they couldn't get in. They were criticized for coming without a reservation, especially during a busy time. The Tokyo University student was looked at with exasperation by everyone, including the "24 Hour Television" group. In the end, they ended up staying at a private residence arranged by the landlady.

《Posted by: Satie》June 15th (Thu) 22:28
□ Hoshino's Proposal

As soon as they entered the room, Hoshino gathered everyone together. In his hand was the envelope of bills he had stolen from that otaku.
"He probably drowned because of this. Let's throw it away."

Everyone was dumbfounded by his words.
Throw it away? This? It's money, you know. You're going to throw away money? Won't that bring more bad luck?
I mean, it's a waste. It's a million yen, you know.
I mean, throwing it away is wrong, isn't it?
It would be better to return it to the person.
That otaku wouldn't even imagine it being stolen and then thrown away. That's just cruel.
Using it would be better for him.

Hoshino, however, showed no sign of wavering.
"Then let's float it out to sea. As a ritual," said Hoshino.

That's the same thing!

"If you scatter it in the sea like that, it'll wash up on the beach and cause a huge fuss."
 "Then let's bury it somewhere. As a ritual," said Hoshino.
 "But that's the same thing as throwing it away!"
 "Throwing it away and burying it are different, though."
 "It's a waste."
 "It's bad for the otaku."
 "Let's bury it and draw a map," said Hoshino.
 "If we ever meet the otaku somewhere, we'll give him the map."
 "That's no good."
 "We'll never meet the otaku."
 "This is a ritual. I almost died. This money is cursed," said Hoshino.
 "Is it the otaku's curse?"
 "It's the island's curse."
 "Seriously?"
 "That's not a thing."
 "Hoshino, are you possessed by something?"

The discussion reached no conclusion, and Hoshino reluctantly put the money in his bag.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 15th (Thu) 22:30

□ Island Festival

That night, we went to see the festival, invited by the Tokyo University student. The Tokyo University student was carrying a serious camera box. We watched the dance of the islanders dressed in tropical-style costumes.

The Tokyo University student continued to take pictures relentlessly. According to his explanation, this is also a festival to praise the gods. The Tokyo University student told us various things about the festivals passed down on this island and their meanings. As we listened to these stories, we began to feel like unwelcome guests, and we completely lost our energy.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 15th (Thu) 22:32

□ Sea Turtle Egg Laying

After the festival, we went to see sea turtles with the Tokyo University student. He said that if we waited on the beach, we might be able to witness a sea turtle laying eggs. "The chances of encountering them are much higher than encountering an Iriomote wildcat," said the Tokyo University student.

When we arrived at the beach, the Tokyo University student opened his camera box and began to prepare. We each squatted on the beach and gazed out at the sea. The water's edge moved gently back and forth like a puddle. In the distance, we could hear the sound of waves crashing against the edge of the reef. And then, just pitch-black darkness. In the end, the turtles didn't come. Instead, we saw a coconut crab. It appeared from the bushes and then quickly disappeared. The Tokyo University student began his lecture. "That's an omnivore, you know. It eats anything. From fruits to frogs. Well, it's like the island's cleaner." The Tokyo University student then pointed at Hoshino.

"You know, if you had just died alone like that and rolled onto the beach, that guy might have come and eaten you. Haha."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 15th (Thu) 22:42

□ Dark Road

Around eleven o'clock, we left the beach. The Tokyo University student said he was going to stick around a little longer and remained there.

"Oh, do you have a flashlight?" Terawaki asked.
 "Oh, it's okay. They say turtles don't like light."
 "No, but it'll be dark on the way back. I have two here."
 "Oh, really? Thanks."

However, on the way back, the other flashlight bulb went out. We had to return along the pitch-black beach.
 "Terawaki! It's all your fault for trying to be a good guy!" Shimizu said, bumping into Terawaki. Terawaki fell dramatically onto the sand.

Suddenly, Nakagai shouted loudly. Everyone was startled by the sound. It seemed like a beetle or something had hit his face.

"Oh! I had one!"

Terawaki said, taking a flashlight out of his backpack.

"You should have said so sooner, idiot," said Shimizu.

The dark road became faintly bright.
 The tide was coming in, and the beach had become unexpectedly narrow.

"I wonder if that person is okay?" I asked.

"He'll be fine. He's an adult," said Shimizu.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 15th (Thu) 22:46

□ Flying Fish

Suddenly, there was a splash, and something crossed in front of us. Something shining passed in front of the flashlight's beam. Hoshino yelled "Ouch!" and recoiled. Nakagai shone the flashlight on the object that had fallen to the ground. It was a large, slender fish. Shaped like a saury. But the size was like a tuna. But what caught our attention even more was its mouth. It was unusually long and thin, and it looked like it would hurt a lot if you got bitten. But it was so thin that it seemed like it would break easily if it accidentally hit a rock. Hoshino was holding his arm. When we shone the flashlight on it, there was a scratch-like wound.

"It was so powerful when it hit me!" Hoshino demonstrated the moment with gestures.

The fish was lying still on the ground. When Shimizu cautiously grabbed its tail, it suddenly jumped with incredible force.

Nakagai said it was payback for injuring Hoshino and picked up a stone from nearby.

He struck the fish's head. Hoshino strangely disliked this act of revenge. He said that if we killed an island animal, we would be cursed again.

"Idiot. If that were the case, the fishermen here would be constantly cursed," said Nakagai.

"The fishermen here are fine, I'm sure. But outsiders are bad," said Hoshino.

"Are you completely possessed by something?" asked Shimizu.

Nakagai and Shimizu took turns hitting the fish's head. After it stopped moving completely, we carried it back to the inn.

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:41

□ The Fish's Identity

The 24 Hour Television volunteers turned pale when they saw the catch we brought back.

"That's a 'Datsu' fish. At night, it jumps out of the sea when it sees light."

"What a foolish fish."

"No, it's a scary fish. If it hits a person, it'll stab them."

"Stab them?"

"Yes. Because its mouth is sharp, it stabs into their body."

"Does it hurt?"

"Of course it hurts when it stabs you. Fishermen often get injured. That's why they try not to shine lights on the sea at night."

We returned to the room and played cards.

Shimizu pulled out a bottle of awamori, a type of liquor, from his bag. I don't know when he got it.

We all took a sip, but it burned our mouths and we couldn't drink much. But we got kind of high and had fun until late at night, and the guests next door yelled at us to be quiet.

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:45

□ The Terrifying Fish

The next day, we went to "Wildcat Sea Adventure." We were supposed to meet the Tokyo University student there. We were planning to sponge off him again.

When we entered the shop, Speed-san and Shisa-san had unusually serious expressions.

"Oh, you guys, this is terrible. The customer from yesterday passed away."

At first, we didn't understand who they were talking about.

When we realized it was the Tokyo University student, everyone's faces turned pale.

"He was stabbed in the chest by a Datsu."

Datsu... the fish from yesterday.

"It's a long, thin fish with a sharp mouth. If you shine a flashlight on the sea at night, they suddenly come flying at you. Even the fishermen around here get injured often. If it pierces you in the wrong place, you can die."

The story was exactly the same as what we heard from the 24 Hour Television volunteers last night. But we hadn't heard that it could be fatal.

"He was unlucky, that guy," said Shisa.

"A single stab to the heart. And they say the fish's face was sticking out of his back."

"Plus, it was almost two meters long. There's no way he could have survived," said Speed-san.

"Even we sometimes have to go out on boats at night and shine lights, but it's rare to get hit. Some people are just really unlucky."

"Since he was a Tokyo University student, he probably used up all his luck in life right there."

"Yeah, that must be it."

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:47

☐ Surreal Death

Dying by a fish stabbing you in the chest.

Such a surreal death exists in the world. At least for me, this was the first time I had experienced someone close to me dying.

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:48

☐ Scene Investigation

Hoshino must have been the most horrified by this incident. Hoshino was a hair's breadth away from being pierced through by that huge fish. In other words, Hoshino had almost died twice yesterday.

When we told Speed-san and the others that we were with the Tokyo University student until the end last night, we were taken to the police.

After explaining the situation at the police station, we were forced to go to the scene with the police officers.

It was what you call a scene investigation.

We were no longer in the mood for sightseeing.

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:49

☐ Ritual

Too many unlucky things were happening.

After returning from the scene investigation, we decided to perform the ritual that Hoshino had proposed.

We couldn't say it was a waste or that it was bad for the otaku anymore. We swam from a nearby beach to a small, uninhabited island just a stone's throw away and buried the stolen money in the bushes.

Then we all put our hands together in prayer.

Island gods, please forgive us.

Please don't kill us. Please forgive us.

I wonder if we were forgiven.

I don't know.

《Posted by: Satie》June 16th (Fri) 22:51

☐ Recollection

When Hoshino almost drowned, I was truly glad he was saved. When the Tokyo University student died, I was shocked, but I was relieved it wasn't Hoshino.

I was truly glad he was saved.
 But now, it's all a story from the distant past.
 The memories of that island, Speed-san and Shisa-san, the
 Tokyo University student who died from being stabbed by a
 Datsu, the strange ritual of sealing the bundle of bills, the
 blue sky of the southern island, the blue of the sea, the white
 clouds.

Arabesque

When white flowers bloom on the hill
 A new life is born
 The name of that flower
 Was given to her

In the spring harbor
 A red ship arrived
 That child abandoned her hometown
 Towards a new scent

She was led
 By the seagulls, by the southern wind
 Carrying the scent of a foreign land
 A new world awaits

Facing the bursting spray
 Throwing away the past
 She tears up slightly

Ritual of rebirth
 Spit out the past
 Shed the old shell

Seagulls, the southern wind
 Carry the scent of a foreign land
 A new world awaits

As she lets her hair down
 The scent of the past is caught in the wind
 She tears up slightly

Seagulls, the southern wind
 Carry the scent of a foreign land
 A new world awaits

She decided not to return
 She decided not to look back
 The arabesque ribbon
 Follows the white trail

Going back to the past

《Posted by: Satie》 June 16th (Fri) 22:52

☐ What I think now

What I think now.

That Lily's "Arabesque" suits that island very well.

And that Hoshino should have died there.

“僕”の中の光。

"The light within 'me'."

それはリライ・シュシュと久野陽子。

That is Lily Chou-Chou and Kuno Yoko.

第十一章
アラベスク

Chapter 11: Arabesque



丘の上に
白い花が咲く頃
新しい生命が産まれた
その花の名前が
彼女に授けられた

春の港に
赤い船がついた
その子は故郷を捨てた
新しい匂いのする方へ
彼女は導かれて行った

カモメが 南の風が
異国の匂いを運んでくる
新しい世界が待ち受けている
はじける飛沫（しぶき）にむかって
過去を投げ捨てる
彼女は少しだけ 涙ぐむ

再生の儀式
過去を吐き捨てよ
古い殻を脱ぎ捨てよ

カモメが 南の風が
異国の匂いを運んでくる
新しい世界が待っている

髪の毛をほどくと
過去の匂いが風に卷かれる
彼女は少しだけ 涙ぐむ

カモメが 南の風が
異国の匂いを運んでくる
新しい世界が待ち受けている
もう帰らないと決めた
ふりかえらないと決めた
アラベスクのリボンが
白い軌跡に沿って
過去に帰って行く

On the hill
When white flowers bloom
A new life is born
The name of that flower
Was given to her

In the spring harbor
A red ship arrived
That child abandoned their hometown
Towards a new scent
She was led

Seagulls, the southern wind
Carry the scent of a foreign land
A new world awaits
Facing the bursting spray
Throwing away the past
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Seagulls, the southern wind
Carry the scent of a foreign land
A new world awaits
She decided not to return
She decided not to look back
The arabesque ribbon
Follows the white trail
Going back to the past

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:31

☐ Kuno Yoko

Kuno Yoko is dazzling.

It was always decided that she would play the school song during any kind of ceremony. If you heard Debussy in the music room after school, it was her playing.

I don't understand classical music, but her melodies are beautiful. She is simply dazzling.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:36

☐ Fingertips

In my second year, I was in a different class from Hoshino, and in the same class as Kuno Yoko.

She sat in the seat in front of me.

During class, her back was always in front of me.

She had beautiful hair down to her shoulders and a large back. When we switched to summer uniforms, I couldn't casually look forward anymore.

The line of her bra, visible through her white blouse, was right in front of me. It was within easy reach.

I was afraid that I might accidentally touch it, and the thought terrified me.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:38

☐ Printouts

When the teacher distributes printouts.

When Kuno Yoko takes one and hands the rest to me.

At times like that, I deliberately look down and extend only my hand. Her hand and my hand touch.

The back of my hand instantly absorbs her soft touch.

My heart feels like it's going to burst. I take one printout for myself and send the rest back.

Kuno Yoko's ether clings to my fingers.

My heart really feels like it's going to burst.

I trace the lyrics of Lily's "Fingertips" on the back of the printout.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:39

☐ Fingertips

Fingertips

If it's the skin of someone I love

I know it right away

That scent

Your scent

I feel the sunrise on my cheek

My fingertips feel you

When I open my eyes
 You are not there
 I wash the dry cup
 I find an earring from behind the sofa
 In that way, my time
 Moves the needle little by little
 Even if you are not here

I look at my own hands. Short, ugly, gnarled hands.
 I fall into a deep self-loathing.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:41
☐ Arabesque

The music room is in the building next to our classroom.

If I peek through the window, I can see a little bit of Kuno Yoko. If I'm lucky, around the time the choir practice ends, I can hear Kuno Yoko's private piano practice. Kuno Yoko was working on Debussy's "Arabesque."

"Arabesque!"

My heart races at that coincidence. Though I'm not familiar with classical music, Debussy is, as you know, an essential item for Lily believers. I pretended to do my homework and stayed in the classroom after everyone else had gone home, enjoying her piano alone.

She always stumbled at the same place.
 And then she would start over. Stumble and start over.
 She would continue this repetition tirelessly.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:42
☐ Miracle of Ether

The shouting of the baseball club, which had been heard from the ground, ceased.

Suddenly, there was silence.

The miracle of Ether happens suddenly.

The sound of her piano stopped.

And then, what I heard next was "Arabesque."

Not Debussy. Lily's "Arabesque."

That's how it sounded to me. Or maybe it was just a coincidence, a similar song. I involuntarily strained my ears to listen. But there was no mistake. Kuno Yoko was definitely playing Lily Chou-Chou's "Arabesque."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 17th (Sat) 22:43
☐ Two Arabesques

A nostalgic scent suddenly spread in the back of my nose.

It always happens when I listen to Lily's "Arabesque."

The blue sky, the blue sea.

The scenery of Iriomote Island. That scent.

But Kuno Yoko's piano, after playing halfway, somehow turned into Debussy's "Arabesque."

Debussy's "Arabesque" has taken over.
The paradise of the South Seas disappears from before my eyes. I couldn't move for a while, holding down my trembling knees.

The magic of Lily.
The magic of Kuno Yoko.
...The synchronicity of Ether.

"Arabesque" is the scene when Lily Chou-Chou went to Tokyo to rely on her father. It's a song about leaving home. A song about leaving your hometown. I wonder if the day will come when I leave this place too.
Does Kuno Yoko want to leave her hometown too?
While thinking such things, I listen to Debussy's "Arabesque" for a while.

《Posted by: Satie》June 17th (Sat) 22:45
☐ Choir Competition Practice

The school choir competition was approaching. We gathered in the classroom from morning for practice. Of course, Kuno Yoko was in charge of the piano. In this class, only Kuno Yoko and Izawa Noriko could play the piano with both hands. However, that morning, it was Izawa Noriko who played the piano. I don't really understand piano skill, but maybe because it was her first time playing, she made a lot of mistakes. Why is this unskilled person playing instead of Kuno Yoko? I'm sure I wasn't the only one who thought that. However, listening to the girls whispering, they were all saying that Izawa Noriko's piano was better.

They are praising her, saying that she is better than Kuno Yoko. Izawa Noriko's performance got worse day by day. It was obvious to everyone that she was not only unskilled but also overwhelmed by the important role.

After school, I saw her practicing in the classroom. Kuno Yoko was beside her, giving her advice.
I couldn't understand at all why Kuno Yoko wasn't playing. Before long, Izawa Noriko, perhaps defeated by the pressure, ended up taking a long absence from school.

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:20
☐ Sasaki Kentaro

The class representative in the second semester is the throne of the one recognized as the true leader of that class. And Sasaki Kentaro was the very embodiment of that.
In the first semester of the first year, Sasaki Kentaro was soundly defeated by Hoshino in the class representative election. However, in the second semester, he won the seat by an overwhelming majority. In the first semester of the second year, the position of class representative went to Yoshii Ryota. But Sasaki Kentaro was elected as the class representative for the second semester and the conductor of the choir competition. Now the place where he stands is truly a sunlit stage. His figure conducting even exudes dignity.

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:22
☐ Tsuda Shiori in the classroom

I glance at Tsuda Shiori. She is singing with her mouth wide open. Tsuda Shiori, who acts cheerful in the classroom.

I can't be like that.

The second-year class without Hoshino. But as long as Tsuda Shiori is there, I can't erase Hoshino from my mind. Because of that, I even feel strangely irritated with Tsuda Shiori. I know it's not her fault, but her very existence weighs down on my shoulders like a huge rock.

I wish she would just become a shut-in or something. That way, I would feel a little more at ease. Why can she come to school so nonchalantly?

No, but I'm the same.

Why am I going to a school like this?

Why can't I change my everyday life?

.....Why?

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:24

☐ Boycott

The day Izawa Noriko finally took a break, Sasaki Kentaro, the class president, nominated Kuno Yoko as a substitute. It was a natural decision. However, Kuno Yoko didn't nod immediately. It was obvious to everyone that she was hesitant about something.

Eventually, with a small sigh, Kuno Yoko sat in front of the piano. Then, as if they had planned it beforehand, a group of girls led by Kanzaki Sumika raised their hands.

More than half of the girls left the classroom. The remaining students were all in an uproar. Sasaki Kentaro yelled for them to be quiet. However, it was because Kuno Yoko started playing the piano that everyone fell silent. She began to play the piano calmly as if nothing had happened.

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:26

☐ Homeroom

Naturally, this became an issue during homeroom that day. As long as Izawa Noriko was absent, there was no other option than for Kuno Yoko to play.

Otherwise, we would have to participate in the competition without accompaniment.

Sasaki Kentaro questioned the girls in the class about the reason for their actions that morning. No one answered. Kuno Yoko is writing something intently in the seat in front of me. When I peeked stealthily, it looked like a musical score. In the end, the situation remained unresolved, and the closing bell rang. After homeroom ended, as if they had planned it again, half of the girls left. Kuno Yoko handed the musical score from earlier to Sasaki Kentaro. And they are discussing something.

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:28

☐ Unaccompanied

That musical score was an a cappella version of this time's competition song. Following that, practice began.

Leaving the parts of the girls who had gone home as they were, Sasaki Kentaro reassigned the remaining people to other parts. Since the numbers didn't match, Clione was assigned to the girls' part. He hadn't hit puberty yet, so he demonstrated a singing voice that made you think he could easily handle soprano.

It was a slightly complicated arrangement, but it was left to Kuno Yoko's conducting. Anyway, since there were no girls to sing the soprano, the melody, I couldn't even tell if it was the actual song. It just sounded like a silly song.

At the end of the practice, Kuno Yoko said something to Sasaki Kentaro like, "I guess we can manage with this."

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:29

□ Kuno Yoko's Magic

After that day, Kuno Yoko stopped participating in practice. As if to replace her, the girls who had been boycotting came back. When they found out there was no piano, they said selfish things like, "We can't sing without it," but when Kanzaki Sumika said it was better than having Kuno Yoko play, their faces became strangely clear.

Sasaki Kentaro waves his baton.
Everyone starts singing.

The song, with the soprano added for the first time, had become a splendid song. Immediately after singing it all the way through, the students other than those who boycotted raised surprised cheers.

"Amazing! It's become a song!"

The boycott group said.

What? Isn't that obvious?

Those girls didn't know what kind of magic it was.

《Posted by: Satie》June 18th (Sun) 19:31

□ The Day of the Choir Competition

The day of the competition.

Our strange chorus was met with snickers from the students. They must have found the chorus without a piano quite odd. After the song ended, the girls, especially Kanzaki Sumika and her friends, blamed Kuno Yoko for something they had caused themselves. They said they were made fools of because of her. However, our class won second place and even received an arrangement award. Originally, there was no such award, but it was specially established this time. It's not just about singing well, but also about being able to approach choral singing from a more creative perspective, which is something we teachers have also learned this time. That was the comment from Mr. Kawabata, the music teacher.

Apparently, it was highly evaluated from an artistic point of view. In the end, the girls' conflict was Kuno Yoko's victory. Although it was Sasaki Kentaro, the conductor, who received the award certificate on stage, there was no doubt that the true contributor was Kuno Yoko.

It's no exaggeration to say that the thunderous applause was for her.

However, Kuno Yoko herself was absent from school that day. The boycott group couldn't have asked for a more amusing story. That's what I think now.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:30

□ Happiness of the Fallen

Saturday, I go to the city with Tadano and Tsuda Shiori. Tsuda Shiori is gradually getting used to the job. She can now handle three or four customers a day without any problems, and sometimes she finishes work after eleven o'clock. If she misses the last train, she takes a taxi home. In such cases, Tsuda Shiori pays the fare.

"You guys should pay sometimes," Tsuda Shiori grumbles.

It can't be helped. I can't touch the money Tadano collected. When I part ways with Tadano at the station, I walk Tsuda Shiori home. Ever since I was made to do this job, Hoshino and his friends stopped extorting money from me. Tadano says to me, "Glad you got promoted."

Promoted.

Indeed, it is a promotion.

When he says "promoted,"

I find myself not entirely disliking it.

Honestly, I'm happy.

It's pathetic, but when a person falls, they find joy in such things.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:32

□ Sasaki Kentaro's Approach

For some time now, Sasaki Kentaro has been approaching me. He talks to me about various things. During breaks, he comes to my seat and chats about trivial matters.

This was a very unnatural sight.

I thought maybe he was asked by Onda or Koyamauchi to do something. Hasumi's been acting strange lately. Maybe they asked him to get in touch with me and report back on how I'm doing, or something.

I'm the worst kind of person.

I don't entirely dislike being favored by Sasaki Kentaro.

Moreover, if Kuno Yoko is still at her seat and Sasaki Kentaro comes over, I talk in a way that she can casually overhear. In a slightly higher tone than usual. As if I'm particularly emphasizing that I'm close to Sasaki Kentaro.

...Not as if. I am indeed emphasizing it. Even if I do that, there's no way Kuno Yoko would look at me differently. But I had nothing else to boast about.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:33

□ The Person I Like 1

"Who do you like?"

"Huh?"

Suddenly asked by Sasaki Kentaro, I'm at a loss for words.

The name Kuno Yoko is floating in my head.
"Isn't there anyone? Like an artist."
I blush at my misunderstanding.

The name Lily is floating in my head.
But I hesitate to put it into words.
Because Lily is not someone you ask about like that.
She's not the subject of trivial small talk.
"Isn't there anyone?"

I try to think of someone on the spot, but no one comes to mind.
I don't want to say Yellow Fellows either.
Kuno Yoko leaves her seat.

"Lily Chou-Chou."
I say it in a slightly louder voice.
I could see a slight reaction from Kuno Yoko.
She definitely glanced at me.
My message reached her.

I thank Sasaki Kentaro.

"Ah, Lily Chou-Chou. I've never heard of her. I might check her out."

The next day, I ended up lending him "Erotic" at his request.

《Posted by: Satie》June 21st (Wed) 21:34

□ The Person I Like 2

The fact that I'm conscious of Kuno Yoko.

Eventually, Sasaki Kentaro notices it.

"You like Kuno?"

One day, he said it bluntly.

It was on the way home from school. I was flustered.

"She's alright." I answered that way, trying to put on a brave front.

"Yeah, I think she's pretty cool too."

I was disheartened by Sasaki Kentaro's words. I can't win against him. Even though I didn't intend to confess to Kuno Yoko myself, I felt a strange sense of defeat.

Besides, he was using me as a pretext. I had mistaken it for him encouraging me, but his real target was Kuno Yoko. An excuse to get closer to Kuno Yoko's seat. What a petty guy. Suddenly, anger welled up inside me. The idol that was Sasaki Kentaro crumbled in an instant. But I don't have the courage to confront him with it.

Then he said, "Confess to her. I'll support you."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:35

□ The Person I Like 3

I was honestly surprised. I didn't understand his intention.

"Why don't you do it?" I said.
 "Me? Nah, I'm good. I already like someone else."
 "Huh? Who?"
 "Tsuda."
 I was speechless.

"I like cheerful girls. Are you going out with her?"
 "Huh?"
 "I saw you walking together in front of the station before."
 "Huh?... Oh."
 My heart felt like it was going to stop.
 "...It was a coincidence. We just happened to bump into each other in town."
 "I wonder if she's going out with anyone?"
 "Tsuda?... No, she's not."
 "Really!"

A beaming smile!
 What a great guy this Sasaki Kentaro is. All my previous resentment and anger vanished in an instant.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:36
☐ The Person I Like 4

I see. He happened to see me and Tsuda Shiori walking in town. So that was the reason he approached me.
 That makes sense.

I still felt like I was being used after all, but since it was Tsuda Shiori, I had no reason to be angry. Rather, I welcomed it.
 ...I felt like I was going to cry.

If they ended up together... it could be the best thing for Tsuda Shiori too. Thinking that, I really felt like crying.

"Well then, set us up. I'll talk to Kuno."

"No, that's fine."

He might be able to protect Tsuda Shiori. He might be able to fight Hoshino. Definitely. Thinking that, his face started to look like Ultraman. Come to think of it, his smooth face did resemble him somewhat.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:37
☐ Phone Call 1

That night, I called Tsuda.
 "Hey, Sasaki wants to meet you."
 "Huh?"
 "Tomorrow after school. Behind the gym."
 "What's it about?"
 "You'll understand when you get there."
 Saying that, I hung up the phone.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:38

□ Phone Call 2

About five minutes later, Tsuda calls me.

"Hey, about what you said earlier. Is it from Hoshino?"

"Huh?"

"What is it?"

"Huh?... No, I told you, it's Sasaki."

"So, it's not about that other thing?"

"That other thing?"

"Work."

"....."

"I need to know what panties I should wear. "

"...Hey, it's Sasaki Kentaro, you know."

"It's not about work?"

"No, it's not."

"This is awful. Lately, all men seem like customers to me."

"I'm sure... it's probably something better."

"Really? What is it?"

"It's okay, you'll understand when you get there."

Saying that, I hung up the phone.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 21st (Wed) 21:39

□ Phone Call 3

Then, I got another call. It was Tadano.

"Can you come out for a bit?"

I slipped out of my room and headed to the taxi company at night. The usual members were waiting for me there.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 23rd (Fri) 04:00

□ Saturday After School

The next day, Saturday after school.

I sneaked into the gym's storage room with Tadano.

Tadano and I each hid inside a vaulting box, holding video cameras. It was all Hoshino's instructions. My knees trembled at the thought of what was about to happen here. Tadano was trembling too.

After a while, Tsujii and Iida arrived. They were doing something while chuckling in low voices. Peeking through the gap in the vaulting box, I saw Iida hiding himself in the folds of a folded mat. Tsujii tapped on Tadano's vaulting box from the outside. Tadano tapped back.

"Are you ready?"

"Yes."

Then he tapped on my vaulting box.

I tapped back in response.

"Get a good shot."

Soon, it became quiet. Iida started to chuckle.

"Hey!" I heard Tsujii's voice.

The sound of a door opening.

And then, someone's voice.

"What did you want to talk about?"

It was a girl's voice.

It's finally starting. I feel like I'm going to throw up.

"There's something I want to ask you."

"What is it?"

There are two silhouettes in front of the door. The girl is wary and doesn't try to enter even when Hoshino beckons her in.

"Come inside."

"It's fine here."

"It's not good if someone hears us."

"There's no one here."

The girl peeks into the storage room.

"What's not good about it?"

I saw Hoshino hug the girl from behind.

《Posted by: Satie》June 23rd (Fri) 04:03

□ Untitled

The girl screamed. But it seemed like a towel or something was pressed against her mouth, so her voice didn't reach the surroundings. The door closed and the surroundings became pitch black. There was a rattling sound. The sound of many footsteps. Someone turned on a flashlight. I could hear the girl's voice struggling. I was trembling with fear, clutching the video camera. There was no way I could film this. Suddenly, the lid of the vaulting box opened. Someone shone a flashlight inside.

He's looking down at me while shining the flashlight here.

I can't see his face. But it's probably Iida.

"What are you doing? Hurry up and film!"

I held up the camera while still crouching.

"Idiot, come out! Film closer!"

I was frozen stiff and couldn't move.

"Damn it, give it to me!"

A hand reached out and snatched my camera. At the same time, I received a punch to the face.

Sparks scattered in front of my eyes.

But for some reason, there was no pain.

《Posted by: Satie》June 23rd (Fri) 04:08

□ Untitled

Through the gap in the vaulting box, I could see the socks of the struggling girl. Tsujii was holding her down, and his face was right there, unexpectedly close.

I timidly lowered my gaze.

The girl's face was even closer.

If it weren't for the wall of the vaulting box, it would be as if she was resting her head on my lap.

I held my breath.

I saw her face.

I hurriedly averted my gaze.

I close my eyes.

I felt a sharp, popping sensation in my head, somewhere between my ear and jaw, it's probably a lymph node. It was like a tiny seed bursting, and a bitter, sour taste flooded my mouth. I couldn't tell what it was in the darkness.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 23rd (Fri) 04:09

☐ "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair"

Every time she struggles and shakes her head, her hair brushes against my hand. Unconsciously, her hair touches my fist, which is gripping the gap in the vaulting box.

Contrary to the gruesome scene, the sensation is incredibly soft. Her gentle ether. Like with hearing loss, the sounds fade away. As if in auditory hallucination, I hear the sound of a piano from afar.

That's "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair."

...Debussy's "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 23rd (Fri) 04:09

☐ Nightmare

Nightmare. Nightmare. Nightmare.

Nightmare.

Nightmare. Nightmare.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 23rd (Fri) 04:10

☐ Untitled

...Kuno Yoko.

Her ether, with a sorrowful cry, was torn to shreds right in front of me, and yet, I could only crouch and tremble.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 01:10

☐ Personnel Change

The next day, Sunday.

I go out to the city with Tsuda Shiori. Tadano has been "promoted" this week and is now in charge of two other girls. I might have been promoted a little too, since I'm now entrusted with Tsuda Shiori alone.

Even thinking that, I feel nothing.

Neither happy nor sad.

That day, my senses were terribly numb.

And then suddenly, I become intensely excited.

I feel like screaming.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 01:11

☐ Restaurant

I wait outside the hotel until Tsuda Shiori finishes her work.

I look up at the sky.
 The clouds are low.
 Clouds that seem close enough to touch.
 An anxious feeling.
 I spit repeatedly.
 Tsuda Shiori comes out.
 She runs towards me, out of breath.

"Look! Look at this!"
 In Tsuda Shiori's hand is a well-worn leather wallet. She stole it from a customer.
 "He was sleeping so soundly."

We run away from the scene.
 Tsuda Shiori suggests,
 "Let's go eat something good!"
 We enter a rather expensive-looking restaurant.
 It was a place unbecoming middle schoolers. We order a 20,000 yen course meal each. Tsuda Shiori says she's going to get revenge on Hoshino by eating a lot of delicious food. She'll gain weight and her market value will drop.

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sun) 01:15
☐ Tsuda Shiori's Logic

"I'm not the worst-looking among the plain girls in our class, right? I'm not trying to brag or anything..."

I couldn't agree with her assessment, but it was true that gaining weight might make her undesirable. It felt like there was some truth to her logic.

According to her, there were close to ten girls who had been caught in Hoshino's trap like this. She said they were all being made to work somewhere. Tsuda Shiori said with a straight face that Tadano being put in charge of two girls was a result of Hoshino's business steadily growing. According to Tadano's information, the boss, Hoshino, and the executives, Iida and Tsujii, should be wandering around somewhere in this city, always accompanied by four or five girls. In hindsight, it wasn't safe for us to be eating at a restaurant like this.

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sun) 01:16
☐ Kanda-senpai Style

"But Hoshino should be taking care of a newbie alone today. Newbies initially work one-on-one with Hoshino."

According to Tsuda Shiori, Hoshino's training was very strict. He demanded disciplined work from the girls. Hoshino even educated them on how to provide services after taking a customer to a room.

"He's strangely meticulous, that guy."
 Tsuda Shiori said so with a scornful laugh. I felt disgust welling up, thinking that it was a very Hoshino-like thing to do. The summer camp I participated in with him a long time ago came back to me vividly.

I recalled the rigorous training. The practice was so tough, it was easy to lose sight of its purpose. But at times like that, discipline and rules were actually comforting. They even had a healing effect on my exhaustion. If I simply entrusted myself to them, I'd achieve my goals without even realizing it. Kanda Senpai's passion was unexpectedly proving useful.

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sun) 01:17

□ Yesterday's Events

Shiori Tsuda said,

"Yesterday, I met Sasaki-kun."

I had completely forgotten about that. They had met behind the gym after school yesterday. What a near miss. What irony. While Kentaro Sasaki was confessing to Shiori Tsuda, we were raping Yoko Hisano.

"Sasaki did what?"

"He said he liked me. He asked me to go out with him."

"What did you answer?"

"I turned him down."

"Why?"

"Because...I'm not a good match for him, am I?"

"That's not true."

"It is."

"Sasaki said he likes cheerful girls, you know."

"I'm not exactly cheerful, am I?"

"You are cheerful."

Shiori Tsuda glared at me.

"Are you blind?"

Saying that, Shiori Tsuda stuffed spaghetti into her cheek.

"'Cheerful' or 'not cheerful' ...those words don't mean anything to people like us."

Saying that, Shiori Tsuda stuffed more spaghetti into her cheek.

I blinked slowly.

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sun) 01:19

□ Anger

A sudden, aimless anger welled up within me. I couldn't help but lash out at Shiori Tsuda.

"Are you an idiot! Why did you refuse!"

Shiori Tsuda looked at me blankly. Her eyes asked, What's gotten into you?

"Sasaki would definitely protect you! He'd fight Hoshino for you! He's that kind of guy! You're really an idiot. What are you doing? You had a chance to escape!"

"Sasaki-kun can't do it."

"Of course he can."

"If you say so, then you protect me."

I was speechless, and Shiori Tsuda sighed.

"But, just now, you were kinda cool."

"....."

"You got all heated up."

"....."

"But, you like Kuno Yoko, don't you?"

"....."

"Huh?"

"It's obvious."

"....."

"Why are you blushing?"

"....."

"Come to think of it, yesterday I saw Hoshino and Kuno walking together."

"....."

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sun) 01:21

□Hope

"She's pitiful, too. If it's Kuno Yoko, she can make money. Hoshino's got a good eye."

For some reason, Shiori Tsuda's words made me feel relieved. What kind of feeling is this? I felt hope in the word "make money." Make money. It meant she might have a future. In other words, there's still tomorrow.

That alone made me feel relieved. A feeling of relief without any reason or basis. I wanted to somehow be saved from yesterday's nightmare, I'm pleased and saddened by such incomprehensible things. This nightmare is different in nature from the ones before. It's not about myself.

It's about Kuno Yoko. It's frustrating that it's not about myself. In the worst-case scenario, no matter how much I try to do something, I can't do anything because it's not me. The worst-case scenario. What will happen to Kuno Yoko?

The worst-case scenario.

Terror runs through my entire body.

I hurriedly savor Tsuda Shiori's words.

"Make money." "Make money." "Make money." "Make money." "Make money."

Will there ever be a day when Tsuda Shiori, Kuno Yoko, and I eat a course meal that doesn't seem like something middle schoolers would eat, just like this? Will we have conversations like, "We made quite a bit today," with sauce staining our lips? At that time, I sincerely hoped such a day would come. I was praying for it to come. Even a depraved tomorrow like that would be fine, even a dirty Kuno Yoko would be fine, I was praying in my heart. Because at least that is definitely not the worst-case scenario. I want to somehow convey that feeling to Kuno Yoko.

But, in the end, I do nothing.

I'm just a useless person who only thinks.

□ Watch

"Kuno stood out too much at that choir competition. And then there's Sumika Kanzaki. She's really close with Tsujii, you know? Do you get what that means? She's the one who manipulated Tsujii. Kanzaki is a nasty woman. Check this watch out!"

Tsuda Shiori held up the watch on her left wrist.

"Guess what she said? She goes, 'That's a nice watch. You must be making good money.' I'm furious. I want to kill that bitch! ...Anyway, what's wrong?"

Tsuda Shiori looked down at my hands.

My left hand was gripping the edge of the table tightly. I felt like I had to hold on to something.

"Oh, your watch..."

Tsuda Shiori grabbed my arm. Tsuda Shiori's hand was warm. "It's broken... Was it broken?"

The word "Life" flashed intensely in my mind.

"Buy a new one with this."

Tsuda Shiori said, opening her wallet.

"No, it's fine. They'll just break it again if I bought a new one." Suddenly, Tsuda Shiori's expression changed.

She signaled to me with her eyes.

When I turned around, a familiar face was there.

It was Iida.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:13

□ Iida, and then Fukase Yayoi

Iida had two girls with him. I knew both of them.

One of them, Fukase Yayoi, was a girl with an oddly anime-like character, and she was quite popular with the boys. Had she also fallen prey? Even though her appearance made it doubtful whether she had even reached puberty.

"Oh my, isn't it Hasumi-kun?"

Fukase let out a carefree anime voice.

"What are you guys doing? In a fancy place like this," Iida said. Iida and the others surrounded our table. The staff and other customers looked at us with puzzled expressions.

"What do you mean...we're eating, is there something wrong with that?" said Tsuda Shiori.

"No, no. Go ahead. But what's Hasumi doing with you?"

"Huh? I'm paying for it. Got a problem with that?"

Iida looked at me. I hung my head. My hands on my knees were sweating like a waterfall.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:15

□ Iida's True Feelings

"You know, you're lucky it's me you're dealing with. If it was the boss, you'd be dead."

Lately, Iida and Tsujii had been calling Hoshino "the boss." And they'd given this whole prostitution thing a ridiculous name like "Star Company"

as they call it.

"Well, take a break once in a while."

Iida said, rubbing my shoulders. It was a gesture I didn't expect from him. Shiori looked up at Iida with a puzzled expression.

"You're being awfully nice today. What's up?"

"Am I?"

Iida let out a big sigh.

"I can't really keep up with the boss lately."

"Huh."

"That guy's serious. He's kinda scary."

"Just follow him, then. Your beloved Boss."

"Cut it out. My future's looking pretty bleak, heh heh heh."

"Where is the boss?"

"Haven't seen him today. Oh, right, today's the newbie's debut."

"He's on a date with Kuno-san," Yayoi Fukase said in a carefree voice.

From outside the window, through the glass, an unfamiliar middle-aged guy was looking in at us. A face I felt like I'd seen somewhere. I couldn't remember. The middle-aged guy quickly walked away.

"Tsujii's been getting pissed at the boss lately too. I might not be able to stop him anymore. Oh, this is a secret, heh heh heh."

After finishing their little chat, Iida and the others left without even having a drink. Shiori let out a sigh of relief. Then she suddenly looked up.

I finally remembered.

He was Shiori Tsuda's customer from two hours earlier.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:16

□ The Old Guy

"Oh, crap."

Shiori Tsuda muttered under her breath.

If this had been McDonald's, we would have bolted and run, but we were swallowed up by the atmosphere of the restaurant, where the only sounds were the clinking of knives and forks. We could only stare up at the old guy's face without moving an inch.

The old guy silently held out his hand.

Shiori Tsuda returned his wallet. The old guy checked the contents. After confirming that the money inside was untouched, he took out two bills, folded them neatly, and placed them in Shiori Tsuda's hand. The old guy had paid the agreed-upon amount for their time together. As the old guy was about to leave, Shiori Tsuda called out to him.

"Um... this."

Shiori Tsuda was bold. She handed the old guy their receipt. The receipt for the full course meal we were currently eating. The old guy took it without saying a word, paid the bill at the register, and then left.

We both let out a big sigh.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:17

☐ Tsuda Shiori's Arm

When we left the restaurant, Tsuda Shiori linked her arm with mine. Leaning against my shoulder, she said, "Man, we ate a lot!" We still had two more clients to meet for the day. She must be exhausted too. Thinking that, I couldn't bring myself to shake her arm off.

Tsuda Shiori asked,
"Would you be shocked if Kuno Yoko saw us like this?"
"Not really."
"What about Hoshino?"
"Not really."
"Liar."

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:18

☐ Strange Hoshino

We continued strolling down the street like that for a while when we suddenly bumped into Hoshino.
I quickly shook off Tsuda Shiori's arm.

"Liar." Tsuda Shiori pouted.

Hoshino was in the middle of the crowd, talking to someone on his phone. I pulled Tsuda Shiori's hand and we hid in the shadows of the buildings.

Hoshino was acting strange. After hanging up the phone, he started pacing in circles, looking restless. It wasn't an exaggeration; he was literally spinning around. And right in the middle of the pedestrian paradise, no less.

I couldn't believe Tsuda Shiori's words.
"He's crying."

No way.
I squinted at Hoshino.
I couldn't tell if he was crying or not.
But there was no doubt that he was distraught about something. Hoshino suddenly started walking.
He bumped into a passerby's shoulder and fell on his butt.
He silently got up and started walking again.
It felt like we had witnessed something incredible.

What had happened to Hoshino?
We didn't know, but at that moment, I felt a flicker of sympathy for the pathetic Hoshino. Tsuda Shiori must have felt the same way. Even though she was witnessing the disgraceful behavior of her hated enemy, she didn't utter her usual insults. The two of us silently watched Hoshino as he staggered away.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:20

☐ October 10th

We didn't know yet.

Kuno Yoko didn't show up at the place where she promised to meet Hoshino that day. And perhaps, that phone call was telling Hoshino the reason why.

Although I don't know who made that call.

The worst-case scenario I had feared...it had already happened.

That day, October 10th.

It became Kuno Yoko's death day.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 25th (Sun) 23:24

□ Wings That Cannot Fly

At Monday morning's assembly, the entire school held a moment of silence for her.

One minute of silence.

The girls started crying one after another.

Even after the moment of silence ended, the low sobbing continued. As for me, the song "Wings That Cannot Fly" kept playing in my head.

Wings That Cannot Fly

The schoolyard looked distorted

I saw white gym clothes

A crow flew low

In the sky

Please share

A little of your black feathers
Stairs reaching for the sky
My hand can't reach that far

The twilight sky is red
Everyone's gaze is cold
And a large stone
Falls from the sky
And crushes me

My heart could see
Things being left behind
Your excuses and lies
Are useless
Like junk
Stairs reaching for the sky
My hand can't reach that far

The twilight sky is red
Everyone's gaze is cold
And a large cloud
Descends from the sky
And hides me

Let's fix our moods and live
The light spilling from the gaps in the sky
Starts moving again

The twilight sky is red
If I throw them away, if I throw them away
I will soar
It will be dark soon
So these wings that cannot fly

So these wings that cannot fly
If I throw them away, if I throw them away
I will soar

《Posted by: Satie》June 25th (Sunday) 23:25
☐ Hollow Ether

I return to the classroom.
The seat in front of me is empty.
A gaping, hollow space.
An eternally vacant seat.
Kuno Yoko's back, which was always right in front of me.
Her back, which I could reach if I stretched out my hand.
A white blouse. The line of her bra.

Those things have already been lost forever.
It doesn't feel real.
Hollow Ether.
October 10th. Two crosses are lined up.
...Lily, yesterday one of your doubles died.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tuesday) 16:33
☐ Interrogation

My homeroom teacher, Akira Onda, whispers something to the detective. I can hear his voice leaking through.
"This child has a slight tendency towards autism."

I was asked several questions, but I couldn't answer a single one. When I left the guidance room, my assistant homeroom teacher, Osanai, patted my head.
"How did it go? About 'Breathing'?"
I gave a bitter smile and didn't answer.
"Go back to the classroom. Don't worry about it too much."
"Teacher."
"What?"
"This..."

I took the 'Breathing' CD, broken in two, out of my pocket and presented it as evidence.
"I'm returning this."
"What happened to it?"

"Hoshino broke it."
 Osanai's face paled for a moment. Osanai put it in her pocket.
 "You mustn't tell anyone about this, okay? Now, go back to the classroom."

When I returned to the classroom, it was in an uproar. Students who had been interrogated were surrounded by those who hadn't, being bombarded with questions. I silently went to my seat. In front of me, a vase held white flowers. It felt like time was about to stop forever. The Ether, tilted and unable to return to its original state.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tuesday) 16:35

□ Hoshino

Shiori Tsuda came to my seat.
 "Did you say anything?"
 I shook my head.
 "Why not?! I won't stay silent. About Hoshino and the others."
 Shiori Tsuda will talk. Even if Shiori Tsuda doesn't, someone else definitely will. Everything will come to light. That's fine. Kuno Yoko's sacrifice was not in vain. Thinking that, all the strength drained from my body. I am saved by Kuno Yoko. I couldn't do anything for her. I blame myself. But relief outweighs that. How selfish humans can be. Shiori Tsuda was gathering the scattered white flower petals on Kuno Yoko's desk with her fingers. Suddenly, I felt a tap on my shoulder from behind. When I turned around, Hoshino was there. Hoshino...

He crouched down beside me and said,
 "You haven't said anything, right?"
 I nodded. Shiori Tsuda, in front of me, also had a stiff face.
 "If you say anything, I'll kill you."
 Hoshino glared at my face as he said that, then glared at Shiori Tsuda.

"You don't say anything either."
 Shiori Tsuda nodded slightly.
 Hoshino left the classroom with a strange smile.
 "What an idiot. He's the most scared one here."
 After a while, the girls started being called to the guidance room. Shiori Tsuda also left the classroom. It was just at that moment. A strange voice and image began to flow from the school broadcast. It was a woman's voice. She was screaming, "Stop! Stop!" The whole school buzzed, and the teachers ran to the broadcasting room. The curious students followed after them.

"Apparently, someone played an adult video."

That information reached our classroom about ten minutes later. It was an adult video. Later, I heard from Tadano that Tadano himself was the perpetrator. Of course, Hoshino made him do it. Just an adult video. But its effect was tremendous. "This is what will happen if you snitch." Hoshino's silent pressure. In the end, no victim could speak the truth.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tuesday) 16:38

☐ Funeral

The next day, Kuno Yoko's funeral was held at her home. Hoshino attended with an unconcerned expression.

After completing the incense offering and going outside, I was called from behind.

"Hey, Hasumi. How are you?"

When I turned around, my former track and field teammates were there.

Terawaki, Shimizu, Nakagai.

The harsh practices of that summer.

The blue sky of Iriomote.

Tears almost came to my eyes.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tuesday) 16:39

☐ Track and Field Club

Why did we, specifically Hoshino and I, end up quitting the track and field club? Even looking back now, I can't find a plausible reason.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tuesday) 16:41

☐ September Classroom

I remember feeling strangely grown-up after that summer vacation, perhaps because of the Iriomote Island experience. It was an oddly exhilarating feeling. However, it certainly wasn't a privilege granted only to me.

September Classroom.

The classroom, after a long absence, had a slightly different atmosphere. Several students had let their hair grow or dyed it. For some reason, their attitudes had become bolder as well.

The atmosphere was as if everyone was stretching, as if to say they had grown up over the summer.

Among them, Tsujii and Iida, having dyed their hair a bright brown and slicked it back with hair mousse, had their feet up on their desks, chewing gum loudly, as if to say they had become delinquents over the summer. Hoshino decided to tease them.

He ruffled Tsujii's hair and said,

"That hair's dangerous, isn't it? You'll get scolded."

Perhaps Hoshino himself was showing off with that attitude. Tsujii brushed Hoshino's hand away and kicked him hard in the stomach. Hoshino fell to the floor.

"Don't touch me!"

Tsujii spat out those words.

Hoshino silently stood up and went straight to his seat.

But he immediately stood up again, turned around, and said to Tsujii, ".....What are you doing?"

I got goosebumps.

The few seconds of silence before he said those words. I could feel Hoshino's pain.

However, Tsujii showed no mercy.

"Just because you read the valedictorian speech, don't get all high and mighty! You're annoying, you little brat!"

Iida, who was next to him, said, "Stop it, man. He's gonna cry. Heh."

Suddenly, Hoshino started running and delivered a flying kick straight to Tsujii. Tsujii flew backward, landing between the desk and chair two rows behind.

It was the first time in my life I'd seen someone faint. The girls screamed "Kyaa!"

But it didn't end there. Hoshino stuck out his tongue and used a box cutter to hack off chunks of Tsujii's hair as he lay unconscious. Then, he turned to Iida, who was staring in stunned disbelief. Iida hurriedly jumped back and fled to the front of the blackboard. Hoshino took aim and threw the box cutter at Iida. Iida cowered and hid behind the teacher's podium. The box cutter embedded itself in the blackboard. Hoshino silently left the classroom.

The label of "model student."

Hoshino had thrown it into the gutter himself.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tue) 16:42

☐ Track and Field Club

Why did we quit the track and field club?

Even looking back now, I can't find a plausible reason. Why did I end up following Hoshino?

Even looking back now, I can't find a reason that seems like a reason. However, back then, I feel like I was always chasing Hoshino's back. Hoshino was my admiration, my goal. Maybe I just didn't realize that goal was simply falling downwards.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tue) 16:45

☐ Abhorrent Existence

An abhorrent existence is something that exists everywhere. We mustn't forget the existence of the new physical education teacher, Seta. Seta mercilessly inflicts corporal punishment on students who are chatting, students who are doing their exercises lazily, students who forgot their gym clothes, and students he simply doesn't like. At first, we couldn't figure out the trick behind the "Seta-style" corporal punishment method, as he called it himself. Students who were touched by him fell to the ground in intense pain. It was like watching a magic show.

There was also this. Several students who were late were made to climb the climbing pole all at once. At the moment they were about to reach the top, Seta touched each pole one by one. Then, the students screamed and fell one after another. Seta laughed loudly. The students also laughed loudly. Why the students fell was a mystery. Eventually, we found out that Seta was using a stun gun.

When the school switched to summer uniforms and the long-sleeved jerseys changed to T-shirts, Seta could no longer hide the stun gun. Once his trick was exposed, he apparently decided there was no need to hide it anymore, and Seta's corporal punishment escalated further. Before long, he even started using this punishment on the losing team in volleyball games. No one dared to oppose this ultimate weapon.

Hoshino was targeted because Seta didn't like his attitude, suffered the stun gun attack multiple times.

"I'll sue him with the Board of Education someday," Hoshino would say as if it were a catchphrase. But one day, he did something outrageous. He connected a car battery, borrowed from his father's taxi company warehouse, to Seta's beloved car. Seta was found unconscious next to his prized BMW. I'm probably the only one who knows Hoshino was the culprit. I know because I was forced to help carry the battery.

Strangely enough, Seta's authority collapsed after this incident. He doesn't know who did it. That's probably why he became afraid of the culprit lurking among the students. We didn't miss the faint fear that appeared on Seta's face. No one listened to him anymore. Of course, Seta was still brandishing his stun gun, but everyone stayed outside a five-meter radius of him. It was a simple matter. And it was fine that way. Even if he told us not to move from that spot, no one obeyed.

Just like that, the stun gun's power was gone. Classes were basically impossible. Seta's voice, when he yelled at us, sounded really weak. Eventually, he started acting super nice, like he was trying to suck up to everyone. It's over for him. One day, Seta scattered flyers announcing that he was holding a barbecue party at his home and invited everyone to come.

"I'm in! Let's all go!" Hoshino said, taking charge. By then, Tsujii and Iida, who were basically following Hoshino around like puppies, were also yelling, "Let's go, let's go!" Seta just kept nodding with this fake smile, saying "I'm looking forward to Sunday."

I really don't want to talk about what happened at that barbecue party. But, Seta got seriously burned and never came back to school. He ended up quitting his job.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tue) 16:47

☐ Reason

Why did Hoshino change so much?
There are other stories about Hoshino changing.
But what I don't understand is the reason.

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tue) 17:04

☐ Old Friends

"Are you still hanging out with Hoshino?"

Terawaki said.

I couldn't answer.

"Nothing good will come from sticking with a guy like that.
Come back to the club."

I couldn't even nod.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 27th (Tue) 17:05

□ Reason

Why did Hoshino turn out like that?

I don't understand the reason.

Reason... does such a thing even exist?

Butterflies don't eat cabbage.

They stop eating the cabbage they used to love so much.

And they become obsessed with sweeter flower nectar.

But, we're somewhere between caterpillars and butterflies.

We're tired of eating cabbage. We want flower nectar.

But, pupae aren't given food.

We have to wait. To become adults.

However, growth varies from person to person.

I was a bit slow, but Hoshino grew up fast.

Too fast.

The he molts through the seasons.

But society isn't forgiving of those who mature too quickly.

The expired pupae slowly rot within the cocoon of school.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 27th (Tue) 17:22

□ Green Uniforms

Several unfamiliar girls in green uniforms appear to offer
condolences.

Green uniforms.

"Hey."

Shimizu signals with his eyes.

Hoshino passes by us. As he goes by, he glances at me
sideways with a sharp look. Tsujii and Iida follow him like
remoras. They don't notice me.

"What's with him? Acting like a gang boss,"

Shimizu says.

"Even though he used to be bullied,"

Nakagai adds.

Tadano hurries past, a little late. As he goes by, he signals
for me to come. My body moves instinctively. As I'm about
to walk, Shimizu grabs my arm. "Hey, don't go!"

I must have been visibly shaken in front of my old friends.
The three of them stare in stunned silence, then give me
pitying looks. The members of "Star Company" leave
without me, walking away proudly. The girls in green
uniforms are, for some reason, seeing them off. Huh?

"Isn't that guy 'shushu'?"

"No way!"

"Haha, hasn't he become kind of normal?"

"Yeah, he's become a normal person."

"Haha, what do you mean by 'normal person'?"

"Haha, if he wasn't a person, what was he?"

"Huh? A slave."

"Haha, yeah, yeah. I remember now!"

"Haha, but even slaves are people, right?"

"Hahahaha."

"I see. Hahahaha."

《Posted by: Satie》June 27th (Tue) 17:36

□ Those Who Know the Past

"Did you hear? He's called a 'shushu'! What's that?

Gross!" Nakagai said.

The girls in green uniforms were former classmates of Kuno Yoko. I remember that Kuno Yoko transferred to our middle school from another elementary school.

Kuno Yoko and Hoshino's past connection.

Hoshino, who used to be bullied.

There are some people who know about his past.

And there's only one person like that in our school.

That person was Kuno Yoko.

That might be the reason for the rape...

My whole body felt like it was falling apart and collapsing.

I could barely stand there.

Hoshino, who used to be bullied.

Hoshino in his elementary school days, was called "Shushu" and treated like a slave.

Shushu... a play on words from Hoshino Shusuke, Shushu.

The worst synchronicity.

薄れてゆくエーテル、身体の中に広がるノイズ。

それはやがて訪れる《啓示》の兆しだった。

The fading ether, the noise spreading within the body.

That was the sign of the 《Revelation》 that would eventually come.

リリイ・シュシュのすべて

いわ いしゆん じ
岩井 俊二

角川
e文庫

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All About Lily Chou-Chou
Shunji Iwai

Translated by: Chrysanthemum



$\zeta^\dagger$

I feel the ether quietly filling the air. Finally, the real world has returned.
Lily must be happy too.
Suddenly remembering, I rolled up my sleeve and looked at my left arm.
The wound on my arm was completely dry. I licked the wound, humming
Lily's song, and headed towards Shibuya Station.
The song was, of course, "Wound That Heals."

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:44

☐ Goodbye

Humans cannot fly.

(The End)

I can't breathe anymore.
Ether! Ether! Ether!

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:20

□ In the Wave of the Crowd

The surroundings are chaotic. The crowd is surging like a wave. My gaze is fixed on Hoshino's back. I push through the crowd to get closer to Hoshino. However, the flow of the crowd keeps pulling us further apart. I wish this flow would change.

Suddenly, I think of something.

"It's Lily!"

I opened my throat and screamed.

"It's Lily!"

And I pointed in the opposite direction from Hoshino.

"Lily is over there!"

The surroundings buzzed. The crowd started flowing in the direction I pointed.

I was pushed from behind by several people. "Where is she?" voices could be heard everywhere. I even heard someone say, "She was over there!" I planted my feet firmly on the ground. Then, I turned around. Hoshino was nearby. He hadn't noticed me. I angled my body against the flow of the crowd and let the people rushing towards the non-existent Lily pass by. Finally, Hoshino passed by my side. I stabbed him in the back with a knife.

"Ugh..."

Hoshino let out a sound as if he'd been pricked by a thumbtack. But without even trying to check the pain, he leaned forward, still searching for Lily.

His knees buckled, and he collapsed.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:40

□ Wound That Heals

An apple was rolling at my feet.

I quickly picked it up and shoved it into my pocket.

I tried to leave the scene quickly, pushing through the crowd. But the more I tried to push through, the more I was pushed back.

"Someone's fallen!"

A voice came from behind.

"Don't push!"

Someone else shouted. A woman's scream could be heard. The screams spread like wildfire, echoing around. But the flow of people didn't change. My foot stepped on something soft. When I looked down, Hoshino was there. He was spitting blood from his mouth. His eyes were vacant. My body was pushed further and further by the wave of people.

I turned on my heel and let myself be carried by the flow. Eventually, I was pushed out of the crowd and stood alone, gazing blankly at the Quatre building. Lily was surely somewhere in this building.

"Are you Blue Cat-san?"
 A green apple was rolling at my feet.
 Instinctively, I picked it up.
 He cautiously approached me.

"You're Blue Cat-san, right?"
 "....."
 "I'm Winter."

He said with a wry smile. Winter, the idol of "LilyPhilia." He was a fat middle-aged man.
 "I didn't mean to deceive you. Well, that's how it is, so sorry. Please don't send me any more emails."
 With that, Winter walked away.

Looking back, I should have laughed out loud. Hoshino had been completely deceived by Winter. Hoshino, releasing dopamine from his brain while gazing at the moon with a fat middle-aged man.
 Serves him right.
 However, at that time, I didn't know that Blue Cat had been sending emails to Winter all along. So, I didn't understand the meaning of Winter's, that is, the fat middle-aged man's, words. I vaguely felt only anger and emptiness.

That my site had been constantly defiled by a middle-aged man. And more than anything, that he had interrupted my precious ritual. A ritual that has been defiled once cannot be repeated. A ritual is that solemn.

I even thought about stabbing him out of spite.
 But when I looked around, he was nowhere to be found.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:19

□ Moment of Suffocation

Eventually, the live show ended, and the audience began to leave the venue. In an instant, the area was filled with people. I was suddenly punched in the side, and my breath stopped. When I turned around, it was Hoshino.

"What the hell, you're still here?"

Hoshino snatched the apple from my hand.

"Did anyone talk to you?"

I shook my head. He was waiting for Winter. Looking back, I now understand why he gave me the apple, took the ticket, and left me outside.

"Hmph. See ya."

Hoshino walked away from me, looking around. He casually held up the green apple so everyone could see it. He transformed from Hoshino into Blue Cat right before my eyes.

At that moment, I see it.

A strong-smelling ether gushing out from Hoshino's back. It wasn't Lily's ether. It was the smell of that ether we used in science experiments.

Wounds That Heal

The evening glow carries melancholy.
 The clear air becomes heavy.
 If days repeat, they might as well end in one day.
 If life is the other side of death,
 I want to die as if I'm living.

A story that begins with love,
 If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of
 nothing.
 What I truly love isn't you,
 It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I
 believe in.

A blank face stands before the mirror,
 It's pointless to force a smile.
 Let's wash my face with water and go out, right now.
 I want to end everything. There's no point in being here
 anymore.

《Posted by: Satie》 July 11 (Tue) 20:07

☐ Perform the ritual

When I came to my senses, the woman was gone. All that
 was around me was my "Wound That Heals"

A dull pain echoed. I slumped down on the stairs, took a
 knife out of my bag, and pressed it against my wrist. My plan
 had totally failed. But thinking that's just how life is, I didn't
 feel the need to change it, and I cut my wrist. Blood started
 to flow. Today is Lily's birthday. That alone was enough for
 me.

The cyclamen I raised with my blood has buds
 If the flowers bloom red
 My wounds will also heal

The blood flowing from my wrist will no longer bloom
 cyclamen flowers.
 These wounds will never heal.

A story that begins with love
 What I truly like is not you
 If you discard it, let's return to a blank page, a world of
 nothing
 It's your sad sighs, that's the only thing I want and can
 believe in

《Posted by: Satie》 July 11 (Tue) 20:17

☐ The one who interrupts the ritual

"Um..."

Someone called out to me. I quickly pulled down my sleeve
 and hid the cut.

I left the line and ran to the concession stand. I bought two colas and returned to the original spot. However, the line had moved much further than expected, and Hoshino was nowhere to be seen. I peered into the hall. Without a ticket, I couldn't go inside.

I looked for Hoshino. Hoshino was waving from inside the hall. I waved back. Hoshino held up the ticket, showing it to me. I wanted to beckon him, but I couldn't bring myself to call Hoshino over. Instead, I held up the colas, acknowledging his signal.

Hoshino, while making sure I could see the ticket, crumpled it up with both hands. Then, in slow-motion throwing form, he threw it in a random direction.

I dropped the colas from my hands. The splashes scattered onto the feet of a nearby couple.

"What do you think you're doing!"

The woman shrieked.

"Oh, I'm sorry."

In that moment of distraction, Hoshino disappeared. I was filled with rage.

"Hey!"

The man from the couple shoved me.

"Ugh! Now my shoes are all sticky!"

The woman said.

I quickly left the scene.

The word "kill" was running through my head.

Ironman 29 was in the winding line. He had stickers with the number 29 on both knees.

He is looking at me. I realize I'm holding the green apple.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 20:04

□ Scalper and the Woman with Long Hair

Seven o'clock at night.

The scheduled start time for the concert.

The crowd that was there just a moment ago had completely disappeared into the hall, leaving only a few scattered figures around. A scalper was trying to sell a ticket at an exorbitant price to a girl who couldn't get one.

The girl was crying, saying she didn't have that much money.

"Oh, well. Whatever you have is fine."

The scalper said, giving the ticket to the girl. I aimlessly wandered back and forth in front of the scalper.

"What do you want? I don't have any more."

The scalper said and walked away.

I sat down under a ginkgo tree and looked up at the hall.

Has it already started?

A woman with long hair was also gazing blankly up at the hall. She probably also failed to get a ticket. But I had one. If Hoshino hadn't done that, I would be inside the hall right now. The woman eventually started humming a song. It was Lily's "Wound That Heals." The singing voice was so pleasant that I unconsciously started humming along.

At first, I thought it was someone else who looked like him.
 But there's no mistaking it. It's Hoshino.
 Hoshino is standing there holding a green apple.
 Hoshino = Blue Cat.
 How could this be?
 Ether! Ether! Ether!
 Ether! Ether! Ether!
 I can barely breathe.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:59

□ Hoshino

My eyes meet Hoshino's. I hurriedly avert my gaze. But it's too late. Hoshino is walking towards me. I can't run away.
 "Why are you ignoring me?"
 "... Hey."
 I wanted to leave that place, but I didn't have the courage.

The heated debate behind me intensifies.
 "But in the end, Philia is Kayama Katsuhiko's band, right? Otherwise, they would still be asking Kayama Katsuhiko to produce for them."
 "Don't you know? Even though he doesn't appear publicly, Kayama Katsuhiko still supports Lily."
 At that shocking statement, the guys lined up in front turned around. One of them said,
 "Hey, don't spout nonsense."

"It's true. I mean, Lily's release schedule and Yellow Fellows' activity periods are conveniently spaced out, aren't they?"
 "Kayama Katsuhiko isn't only working with Yellow Fellows, you know."
 "Yeah, but..."
 "Anyway, you've been noisy for a while now."
 Kicked by those around him, the Philia fan fell silent.
 Watching this, Hoshino was holding back his laughter.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 20:01

□ Tickets and Green Apple

"Hey, where's your seat? Show me your ticket."
 I took the ticket out of my pocket.
 I handed the ticket to Hoshino.

"Hey, hold this."
 Hoshino said, handing me the green apple.
 "Don't eat it."
 Hoshino brought the ticket close to his face, comparing it to his own.
 "Oh, this one's better. Let's switch."
 "Huh?"
 "It's okay, right?"
 While saying this, Hoshino didn't actually exchange tickets, but just held mine while looking around.
 "Hey, I'm thirsty. Go buy me a cola."

"Which song do you like best?"

"Huh? ... The best one... 'Glide,' I guess."

It seems the two people in the conversation are meeting for the first time.

"Wow! I like all of them, but in the end, I can't help but love 'Abnormality' the most."

"Huh? From the Philia era?"

"Yeah."

Is this guy for real? The other person seems to have thought the same thing. They made a slightly dubious face.

"'Abnormality'? What's so good about it?"

"When you say 'Lily Chou-Chou,' fans are divided into those from before her solo debut and those from after, right? You seem to be from after her solo debut."

"I don't know much about her Philia era. Besides, I don't really like Kayama Katsuhiro, so..."

"That's a shame."

His eyes start to sparkle.

"Philia is the best. Have you ever listened to them?"

"Of course."

"Don't you think it's good?"

"I don't know. Because, you know, Lily only did vocals."

"You don't know? She wrote the lyrics for all the songs."

"It's ghost-written."

"That's just a theory, but I definitely don't think so. Hey, listen to this..."

"Give this a listen."

Saying that, the Philia fan hands his headphones to his companion.

His companion reluctantly puts on the headphones.

"Do you know this one?"

"Yeah, I know it. It's 'Manic & Depressive,' right?"

"Yep."

"So, what do you think?"

"Yeah, it's good."

"It's the best."

The Philia fan is satisfied, but his companion still has an unconvinced look on their face.

Naturally.

Whether it's "Manic & Depressive" or "Abnormality," they're ultimately imitations. Despite using words like "abnormality," "addiction," "manic-depressive," and "paranoia," in the end, the conclusion is always "I love you." In short, they're just mediocre love songs. That's the worldview that Yellow Fellows perfectly inherited. There's no ether in that.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:57

□ Green Apple

As I casually looked towards the back of the line, a blue apple caught my eye. My heart skipped a beat, and I looked at the person's face.

Hoshino.

Many, many,
Fill this town.

I'm on the rooftop,
Listening to your story,
Holding back my pee.
The wind is cold.
Your words are hot, but
Your voice
Freezes me.

A maddening love
Is crammed
Into box-like houses.
Many such houses,
Many, many,
With lights on,
Illuminate this star.

I'm on the rooftop,
Being held by you,
Holding back my pee.
The wind is cold.
A human body is warm, but
That warmth...

Freezes me.
Hating someone,
Confined in box-like houses.
Loving someone,
Confined in box-like houses.
Many such houses,
Many, many,
Supporting the rooftops,
Looking up at the red moon.

《Posted by: Satie》 July 11th (Tue) 19:55

□ "Abnormality" and "Manic & Depressive"

"Lily's songs often feature intense love scenes, but those are products of her imagination. She didn't have a physical relationship with Kayama Katsuhiro either. She doesn't have physical relationships with anyone. So they're all products of her imagination."

"So you're saying 'Erotic' is depicted as the past, but that's the real Lily?"

"That's right."

"'Erotic' is the best."

He's probably looking for his other friends. He's looking around restlessly.

"Hey, Philia is here!"

"Satie is here too!"

I mutter to myself. I almost laughed out loud at how absurd it was, but I hold it back.

I looked around. I wonder if anyone else is here.

But I can't remember the identifying mark.

Pascal?

Ironman 29?

Sleepy Head said she'd be lurking. Maybe Sleepy Head is somewhere holding back her laughter while watching Bear.

What was I supposed to be wearing as a identifying mark?

If it were Satie...

If it were Philia...

Damn. I can't remember what I wrote.

A green apple.

That's Blue Cat.

I looked for someone holding a blue apple.

But I couldn't find anyone.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:52

□ 5:00 PM

By five o'clock, the number of spectators had more than doubled.

There were guys munching on hot dogs to fill their stomachs.

Couples flirting.

Guys squatting with headphones on.

I had CDs in my bag, but I decided to wait until I heard the real Lily's voice.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:53

□ Home

The two people behind me were talking about Lily Chou-Chou.

"That rooftop with a lot of roofs visible, right? That's the scenery from when Lily lived in Noto."

"You don't understand Lily's rhetoric at all. That's a story from when Lily was alone on the rooftop in high school."

The "Home" in question is a song with these lyrics:

Home

Overwhelming emotions

Are crammed

Into box-like houses.

There are many

Such houses.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:48

☐ The Promised Day

On December 8th, I left the house at ten in the morning and boarded a train bound for Tokyo instead of going to school. The sensitivity within me had reached its peak in life. There was still time before the concert, so I wandered around to kill time.
3:00 PM.

I entered a stall in a department store restroom and took out a knife wrapped in a handkerchief from my bag. With this, I will cut my wrists. When the concert starts and Lily appears before me... when Lily starts singing, I will cut my wrists. How long will it take for the blood flowing from my wrists to drain from my body? At least it will be finished during the two and a half hour concert. I will reach the place where Kuno Yoko is, enveloped in Lily's sound.

It's not heaven. It's inside the ether.

That place is, for example, "Wings That Can't Fly," "Arabesque," "The Healing Wound," "The Silent Tree," "Lake," "Airship," "Life Without Makeup," Rumble Fish," "Experiment of Love," "Dog's Eyes," "Erotic," "Music Box," "Video Tape," "Home," "The Promised Day," "Fingertips," "Sad Eyes," "Glide," "Friends," "Saturday Mail," "Sweater".

"Gap of Solitude," "Afternoon," "Flower Eyes," "September Rain's Heart," a veranda with a withered fir tree, a market where chickens are stolen, a Friday afternoon where a black dog sticks its head through a crack in the bricks, a round, ripe moon night when a music box starts playing, the smell of damp virgin menstruation, the lukewarm water of a lake, in front of three doors where the witch has gone, in a glass with rumble fish, a clear evening carrying melancholy, footage in a video tape, the email address used for the experiment of love, a lonely self returning on a Saturday morning, the morning glow felt on the cheek, the afternoon sunlight where Czerny can be heard, blue sky and white clouds, a path of spring breeze and dandelions, the rooftop, in front of the door, a window decorated with flowers, in the midst of deception, Saturday mail from the dead, the poorly made sweater worn by my father, a rat's corpse, a valley between buildings, an arabesque ribbon returning to the past, the September rain's heart, and the falling stone of October 10th.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:50

☐ Bear

Four o'clock in the evening. A considerable number of fans had gathered around Quatre. In the line, a man holding a teddy bear caught my eye. It was [Bear]. I had completely forgotten about the offline meeting until then. Even if I had remembered, I would have just been lurking. [Bear] was standing holding a teddy bear.



夕映えが憂鬱さ 運んでいる
透き通る 空気は 重くなって
繰り返す日々ならば 一日で終わればいい
生が死の裏側なら
生きてるように死んでみたい

愛から始まる 物語
捨てたら 白紙のページに戻っていかう 何もない世界
好きなのは 本当は あなたじゃなく
あなたの苦い溜息 それだけが欲しくて 信じていられるの

表情のない顔立ちが 鏡の前
微笑みを作っても 仕方がないよ
水を貯め 顔を洗い 出かけよう 今すぐに
全て終わりにしたいの ここには もういる意味はない

あたしの血で育てた シクラメン つぼみつけた
花が 赤く 咲いたなら
あたしの傷も癒えていく

愛から始まる 物語
捨てたら 白紙のページに戻っていかう 何もない世界
好きなのは 本当は あなたじゃなく
あなたの苦い溜息 それだけが欲しくて 信じていられるの

The evening glow carries melancholy.
The clear air becomes heavy.
If days repeat, they might as well end in one day.
If life is the other side of death,
I want to die as if I'm living.

A story that begins with love,
If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of nothing.
What I truly love isn't you,
It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I believe in.

A blank face stands before the mirror,
It's pointless to force a smile.
Let's wash my face with water and go out, right now.
I want to end everything. There's no point in being here anymore.

Cyclamen, grown with my blood, has buds.
If the flowers bloom red,
My wounds will also heal.

A story that begins with love,
If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of nothing.
What I truly love isn't you,
It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I believe in.

終
章
回復する傷

Final Chapter: Wound That Heals

星の点と点が結ばれる時、あの事件が起きる。

When the points of the stars connect, that incident will occur.

I look at my left wrist. My wrist wasn't cut either.
A dream?
...No, that's not it. This is a revelation.

Among the crowds, overflowing with people,
Why did I choose only you?

September's rain-soaked heart
Weakens even the last of courage.

I don't want to make excuses, but
I hate being hit.

《Posted by: Satie》June 30th (Fri) 18:56

□ Revelation

Playing the piano, probably Lily Chou-Chou's, red blood drips onto
the back of her hand, onto the keys.

It drips in slow motion.

"I wonder if I can stay alive until this song is over?"

When I said that, Lily answered like this.

"You're already dead."

When I turned around, Kuno Yoko was there.

When I woke up, it was my usual room. Something fell onto my
cheek from the ceiling.

It was blood.

I hurriedly turned on the light and looked in the mirror. There was
nothing on my cheek.

When I looked up at the ceiling, there was nothing there either.

第十二章
九月の雨の心臓

Chapter 12: September Rain's Heart



カサをさし
イエをでる

びしょぬれの犬と
すれちがう

そのあわれなうしろすがたに
おしえられ
にごった川に カサ なげこむ

九月の雨の心臓は
最後の勇気さえ萎えさせる

水たまり 跳ねる足
泳ぐように かわす雨のとばり
人ごみのなか あふれる人の中
なぜ あなただけを 選んだのだろう

九月の雨の心臓は
最後の勇気さえ萎えさせる

言い訳なんて したくないけど
なぐられるの いやだから

Umbrella in hand,
I leave the house.

I pass a drenched dog,
Its pitiful back

Tells me something,
I throw my umbrella into the murky river.

September's rain-soaked heart
Weakens even the last of courage.

Feet splashing in puddles,
Dodging curtains of rain as if swimming,
Among the crowds, overflowing with people,
Why did I choose only you?

September's rain-soaked heart
Weakens even the last of courage.

I don't want to make excuses, but
I hate being hit.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 30th (Fri) 18:43

□ Seat Change

One month has passed since Kuno Yoko died. One day, there was a seat change. Kuno Yoko's seat disappeared from the classroom at that point.

Until now, Kuno Yoko had been in front of me, but now Sumika Kanzaki's back took her place. Sumika Kanzaki had become quiet as if she were a different person. It wasn't just her. It was the same with Hoshino. Thanks to the police's lenient investigation, they were all able to live peacefully without their crimes being exposed.

One day, I was called out by Tadano.

"Come with me for a bit."

Tadano took me to that dreaded gymnasium storage. Iida, Tsujii, and Sumika Kanzaki were there.

"What do you think of Hoshino?"

"Huh?"

"You must have a lot of resentment against him too, right?"

"If he hadn't brought up Kuno Yoko..."

"We can't just let this go on, can we? A person died. We have to make him pay for his sins."

Everyone had a somewhat cornered look on their faces. Even though they weren't caught by the police, they must be having sleepless nights. They all want to blame everything on Hoshino and feel relieved.

"More than that, we should tell the police after all,"

Sumika Kanzaki said.

"But if we do that, he'll definitely tell on us too," Tsujii said.

"I have nothing to do with it," Sumika Kanzaki said.

"You're the one who started this!"

"I didn't tell you to rape Kuno Yoko, dumbass. I've never said anything like that....." Sumika Kanzaki pointed at Iida.

"That was Hoshino's instruction," Iida said.

Tsujii nodded vigorously in agreement.

"More than that, we need to take Hoshino down, or this won't be over," Iida said while biting his nails.

"Hey Tadano, you think so too, right?"

"Huh?... Yes."

"But these guys won't be much help," Tsujii said.

"That's not true. Hasumi is fast on his feet."

"Speed has nothing to do with this."

"If the four of us do it, even Hoshino will die."

However, in the end, this coup was not executed.

However, the group's dynamics changed significantly after that. Iida and the others stopped associating with Hoshino. Iida and Tsujii started to be seen in different groups.

"Star Company" had effectively disbanded, and Hoshino was isolated.

《Posted by: Satie》June 30th (Fri) 18:46

□ End of War

One day after school, as I left the school building, I witnessed something unexpected. Hoshino was running on the school grounds. He had returned to the track and field club. He was jogging on the grounds with Kanda-senpai and Terawaki. My whole body boiled with anger. But at the same time, I also felt completely empty and worn out. The end of war. That's right... that's it. I was finally liberated from those nightmarish days.

《Posted by: Satie》June 30th (Fri) 18:48

□ Family Matters

Around the same time, my father was finally kicked out of the house. It was a short relationship. On the day my father left, my mother went to work early, so my brother and I saw him off. Though "seeing him off" just meant walking him to the front door, my brother was pitiful, even though he was a stranger. My father was unemployed, so he was temporarily taken in by our house. Until yesterday, my brother was a member of the family. Today, he's just someone staying here for free. I'll try to treat him kindly.

"Take care. Yuichi, look after Shinji."

That was my father's last word. I couldn't say goodbye. Even though we weren't connected by blood, he was still my father, and it felt strange to say "goodbye" to him.

His departing figure was utterly wretched.

Ah, that's right. I should have said "take care" too. It's not too late to say it now. But I couldn't put it into words. Suddenly, I recalled Lily Chou-Chou's "Sweater".

Sweater

Because I want to be kind,
I knit a sweater.
A poorly made sweater.
I wouldn't want to wear it myself, but
Dad was happy.

Dad's departing figure, walking.
A brown sweater.

Recently, finally,
Our conversations began to flow.

With difficulty, finally,
We became good strangers.

I still can't believe
We're connected by blood.

Dad's departing figure, walking.
A brown sweater.

When will I feel
We're family?
Until then, Dad,
Please keep breathing.

Dad's departing figure, walking.
A poorly made sweater.

A life nearing its end.
Because you lived it with effort,
Please strive to conclude it well.

"...Please strive to conclude it well."
I muttered faintly.
But my father is still too young to die.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 30th (Fri) 18:49

□ Terminal Symptoms

In a sense, I was freed from the curse of Hoshino and the others, but for some reason, I couldn't calm down. I was tormented by a feeling of unease unlike anything I'd felt before. I had dreams every night of being lynched by Hoshino and the others. I would wake up in a cold sweat, trembling in fear until I realized it was a dream. I never had dreams like this when I was being threatened by Hoshino and the others.

Before long, I started to lose the ability to hear Lily Chou-Chou. Even when I listened to CDs, it felt like Lily's songs were passing through my ears without registering. Instead, the surrounding noises became abnormally loud. The voices of news announcers sounded louder than usual, and I would turn down the volume, which would lead to my mother complaining. During meals, I would feel nauseous from the sound of my mother chewing. In class, the sound of the teacher writing on the blackboard with chalk bothered me, and even the sound of shoes walking on the floor became unbearable. During the final exam, when Osanai started distributing the answer sheets, the rustling sound of the papers echoed throughout the classroom, and I couldn't help but scream. I ran out of the classroom and vomited in the bathroom. As a result, I couldn't take the exam that day and ended up sleeping in the nurse's office. I was examined by the school nurse, Morio-sensei, and when I told her that the sounds were too loud and made me feel sick, she said it was common during adolescence and told me not to worry. But I knew. Unless I regained Lily, this illness-

-won't heal.
The ether is running out.

《Posted by: Satie》June 30th (Fri) 18:52

□ Dream

In November, Lily Chou-Chou's live performance was featured in the latest issues of "OTO-JIRO," "AC-DC," and "SCUD."

December 8th. Shibuya Quatre.
"Breathy Birthday."
I immediately secured a ticket.

One night, I had a dream.
I was at the concert venue. Lily was playing a piano instrumental on stage. It was Debussy's "Arabesque." I was holding my left wrist with my right hand. A large wound gaped open on my left wrist, and blood was flowing out. A puddle of my blood had formed on the floor. There were many people around Lily, but they were out of focus, and their figures were just swaying. Even though it was a dream, I was sleepy. I couldn't help but feel sleepy.
Someone shook me, and I woke up. An older woman wearing thick glasses was looking down at me, holding shopping bags in both hands.
"You'll catch a cold if you sleep in a place like this," the woman said. I looked around, and it was the staircase at the entrance of a run-down apartment building. It was raining. Raindrops had soaked my feet.

"Are you a Lily fan?"
The old woman said.

"Lily isn't here anymore. Do you know about the incident with a man named Noda? After that, the media swarmed this place." The old woman went inside the apartment. I followed her. As we climbed the stairs, she said, "Until recently, people like you were always coming here, but they left trash everywhere, and I was yelling at them every day. I'm glad they've stopped coming. Look, that's the room Lily used to live in."

The green door and the surrounding walls were covered with fan graffiti. The old woman opened the door on the opposite side and went in. I followed her. Since it was a dream, the old woman didn't seem to mind. She even made tea for me.
"Can I play this?" I pointed to the dusty upright piano in the corner of the room.
"Oh, can you play?"
"Yes."

I couldn't play. But in the dream, I felt like I could. I opened the piano lid, placed my hands on the keys, and closed my eyes. The sound began. My fingers were fluently playing the keys. "September Rain's Heart."

However, I couldn't play the last bar of the intro properly. I tried it several times. Then, the old woman's hand reached out and played the rest.

It started. I was sandwiched between the old woman and the piano, my heart felt like it was going to stop. Because the old woman's singing voice was unmistakably Lily Chou-Chou's.

《Posted by: Satie》 June 30th (Fri) 18:53

□ September Rain's Heart

September Rain's Heart

Umbrella in hand,
I leave the house.

I pass a drenched dog,
Its pitiful back

Tells me something,
I throw my umbrella into the murky river.

September's rain-soaked heart
Weakens even the last of courage.

Feet splashing in puddles,
Dodging curtains of rain as if swimming,

Among the crowds, overflowing with people,
Why did I choose only you?

September's rain-soaked heart
Weakens even the last of courage.

I don't want to make excuses, but
I hate being hit.

《Posted by: Satie》June 30th (Fri) 18:56

□ Revelation

Playing the piano, probably Lily Chou-Chou's, red blood drips onto
the back of her hand, onto the keys.

It drips in slow motion.

"I wonder if I can stay alive until this song is over?"

When I said that, Lily answered like this.

"You're already dead."

When I turned around, Kuno Yoko was there.

When I woke up, it was my usual room. Something fell onto my
cheek from the ceiling.

It was blood.

I hurriedly turned on the light and looked in the mirror. There was
nothing on my cheek.

When I looked up at the ceiling, there was nothing there either.

I look at my left wrist. My wrist wasn't cut either.
A dream?
...No, that's not it. This is a revelation.

星の点と点が結ばれる時、あの事件が起きる。

When the points of the stars connect, that incident will occur.

終
章
回復する傷

Final Chapter: Wound That Heals

夕映えが憂鬱さ 運んでいる
透き通る 空気は 重くなって
繰り返す日々ならば 一日で終わればいい
生が死の裏側なら
生きてるように死んでみたい

愛から始まる 物語
捨てたら 白紙のページに戻っていかう 何もない世界
好きなのは 本当は あなたじゃなく
あなたの苦い溜息 それだけが欲しくて 信じていられるの

表情のない顔立ちが 鏡の前
微笑みを作っても 仕方がないよ
水を貯め 顔を洗い 出かけよう 今すぐに
全て終わりにしたいの ここには もういる意味はない

あたしの血で育てた シクラメン つぼみつけた
花が 赤く 咲いたなら
あたしの傷も癒えていく

愛から始まる 物語
捨てたら 白紙のページに戻っていかう 何もない世界
好きなのは 本当は あなたじゃなく
あなたの苦い溜息 それだけが欲しくて 信じていられるの

The evening glow carries melancholy.
The clear air becomes heavy.
If days repeat, they might as well end in one day.
If life is the other side of death,
I want to die as if I'm living.

A story that begins with love,
If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of nothing.
What I truly love isn't you,
It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I believe in.

A blank face stands before the mirror,
It's pointless to force a smile.
Let's wash my face with water and go out, right now.
I want to end everything. There's no point in being here anymore.

Cyclamen, grown with my blood, has buds.
If the flowers bloom red,
My wounds will also heal.

A story that begins with love,
If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of nothing.
What I truly love isn't you,
It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I believe in.



《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:48

☐ The Promised Day

On December 8th, I left the house at ten in the morning and boarded a train bound for Tokyo instead of going to school. The sensitivity within me had reached its peak in life. There was still time before the concert, so I wandered around to kill time.
3:00 PM.

I entered a stall in a department store restroom and took out a knife wrapped in a handkerchief from my bag. With this, I will cut my wrists. When the concert starts and Lily appears before me... when Lily starts singing, I will cut my wrists. How long will it take for the blood flowing from my wrists to drain from my body? At least it will be finished during the two and a half hour concert. I will reach the place where Kuno Yoko is, enveloped in Lily's sound.

It's not heaven. It's inside the ether.

That place is, for example, "Wings That Can't Fly," "Arabesque," "The Healing Wound," "The Silent Tree," "Lake," "Airship," "Life Without Makeup," Rumble Fish," "Experiment of Love," "Dog's Eyes," "Erotic," "Music Box," "Video Tape," "Home," "The Promised Day," "Fingertips," "Sad Eyes," "Glide," "Friends," "Saturday Mail," "Sweater".

"Gap of Solitude," "Afternoon," "Flower Eyes," "September Rain's Heart," a veranda with a withered fir tree, a market where chickens are stolen, a Friday afternoon where a black dog sticks its head through a crack in the bricks, a round, ripe moon night when a music box starts playing, the smell of damp virgin menstruation, the lukewarm water of a lake, in front of three doors where the witch has gone, in a glass with rumble fish, a clear evening carrying melancholy, footage in a video tape, the email address used for the experiment of love, a lonely self returning on a Saturday morning, the morning glow felt on the cheek, the afternoon sunlight where Czerny can be heard, blue sky and white clouds, a path of spring breeze and dandelions, the rooftop, in front of the door, a window decorated with flowers, in the midst of deception, Saturday mail from the dead, the poorly made sweater worn by my father, a rat's corpse, a valley between buildings, an arabesque ribbon returning to the past, the September rain's heart, and the falling stone of October 10th.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:50

☐ Bear

Four o'clock in the evening. A considerable number of fans had gathered around Quatre. In the line, a man holding a teddy bear caught my eye. It was [Bear]. I had completely forgotten about the offline meeting until then. Even if I had remembered, I would have just been lurking. [Bear] was standing holding a teddy bear.

He's probably looking for his other friends. He's looking around restlessly.

"Hey, Philia is here!"

"Satie is here too!"

I mutter to myself. I almost laughed out loud at how absurd it was, but I hold it back.

I looked around. I wonder if anyone else is here.

But I can't remember the identifying mark.

Pascal?

Ironman 29?

Sleepy Head said she'd be lurking. Maybe Sleepy Head is somewhere holding back her laughter while watching Bear.

What was I supposed to be wearing as a identifying mark?

If it were Satie...

If it were Philia...

Damn. I can't remember what I wrote.

A green apple.

That's Blue Cat.

I looked for someone holding a blue apple.

But I couldn't find anyone.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:52

□ 5:00 PM

By five o'clock, the number of spectators had more than doubled.

There were guys munching on hot dogs to fill their stomachs.

Couples flirting.

Guys squatting with headphones on.

I had CDs in my bag, but I decided to wait until I heard the real Lily's voice.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:53

□ Home

The two people behind me were talking about Lily Chou-Chou.

"That rooftop with a lot of roofs visible, right? That's the scenery from when Lily lived in Noto."

"You don't understand Lily's rhetoric at all. That's a story from when Lily was alone on the rooftop in high school."

The "Home" in question is a song with these lyrics:

Home

Overwhelming emotions

Are crammed

Into box-like houses.

There are many

Such houses.

Many, many,
Fill this town.

I'm on the rooftop,
Listening to your story,
Holding back my pee.
The wind is cold.
Your words are hot, but
Your voice
Freezes me.

A maddening love
Is crammed
Into box-like houses.
Many such houses,
Many, many,
With lights on,
Illuminate this star.

I'm on the rooftop,
Being held by you,
Holding back my pee.
The wind is cold.
A human body is warm, but
That warmth...

Freezes me.
Hating someone,
Confined in box-like houses.
Loving someone,
Confined in box-like houses.
Many such houses,
Many, many,
Supporting the rooftops,
Looking up at the red moon.

《Posted by: Satie》 July 11th (Tue) 19:55

□ "Abnormality" and "Manic & Depressive"

"Lily's songs often feature intense love scenes, but those are products of her imagination. She didn't have a physical relationship with Kayama Katsuhiko either. She doesn't have physical relationships with anyone. So they're all products of her imagination."

"So you're saying 'Erotic' is depicted as the past, but that's the real Lily?"

"That's right."

"'Erotic' is the best."

"Which song do you like best?"

"Huh? ... The best one... 'Glide,' I guess."

It seems the two people in the conversation are meeting for the first time.

"Wow! I like all of them, but in the end, I can't help but love 'Abnormality' the most."

"Huh? From the Philia era?"

"Yeah."

Is this guy for real? The other person seems to have thought the same thing. They made a slightly dubious face.

"'Abnormality'? What's so good about it?"

"When you say 'Lily Chou-Chou,' fans are divided into those from before her solo debut and those from after, right? You seem to be from after her solo debut."

"I don't know much about her Philia era. Besides, I don't really like Kayama Katsuhiro, so..."

"That's a shame."

His eyes start to sparkle.

"Philia is the best. Have you ever listened to them?"

"Of course."

"Don't you think it's good?"

"I don't know. Because, you know, Lily only did vocals."

"You don't know? She wrote the lyrics for all the songs."

"It's ghost-written."

"That's just a theory, but I definitely don't think so. Hey, listen to this..."

"Give this a listen."

Saying that, the Philia fan hands his headphones to his companion.

His companion reluctantly puts on the headphones.

"Do you know this one?"

"Yeah, I know it. It's 'Manic & Depressive,' right?"

"Yep."

"So, what do you think?"

"Yeah, it's good."

"It's the best."

The Philia fan is satisfied, but his companion still has an unconvinced look on their face.

Naturally.

Whether it's "Manic & Depressive" or "Abnormality," they're ultimately imitations. Despite using words like "abnormality," "addiction," "manic-depressive," and "paranoia," in the end, the conclusion is always "I love you." In short, they're just mediocre love songs. That's the worldview that Yellow Fellows perfectly inherited. There's no ether in that.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:57

□ Green Apple

As I casually looked towards the back of the line, a blue apple caught my eye. My heart skipped a beat, and I looked at the person's face.

Hoshino.

At first, I thought it was someone else who looked like him.
But there's no mistaking it. It's Hoshino.
Hoshino is standing there holding a green apple.
Hoshino = Blue Cat.
How could this be?
Ether! Ether! Ether!
Ether! Ether! Ether!
I can barely breathe.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 19:59

□ Hoshino

My eyes meet Hoshino's. I hurriedly avert my gaze. But it's too late. Hoshino is walking towards me. I can't run away.
"Why are you ignoring me?"
"... Hey."
I wanted to leave that place, but I didn't have the courage.

The heated debate behind me intensifies.
"But in the end, Philia is Kayama Katsuhiko's band, right? Otherwise, they would still be asking Kayama Katsuhiko to produce for them."
"Don't you know? Even though he doesn't appear publicly, Kayama Katsuhiko still supports Lily."
At that shocking statement, the guys lined up in front turned around. One of them said,
"Hey, don't spout nonsense."

"It's true. I mean, Lily's release schedule and Yellow Fellows' activity periods are conveniently spaced out, aren't they?"
"Kayama Katsuhiko isn't only working with Yellow Fellows, you know."
"Yeah, but..."
"Anyway, you've been noisy for a while now."
Kicked by those around him, the Philia fan fell silent.
Watching this, Hoshino was holding back his laughter.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 20:01

□ Tickets and Green Apple

"Hey, where's your seat? Show me your ticket."
I took the ticket out of my pocket.
I handed the ticket to Hoshino.

"Hey, hold this."
Hoshino said, handing me the green apple.
"Don't eat it."
Hoshino brought the ticket close to his face, comparing it to his own.
"Oh, this one's better. Let's switch."
"Huh?"
"It's okay, right?"
While saying this, Hoshino didn't actually exchange tickets, but just held mine while looking around.
"Hey, I'm thirsty. Go buy me a cola."

I left the line and ran to the concession stand. I bought two colas and returned to the original spot. However, the line had moved much further than expected, and Hoshino was nowhere to be seen. I peered into the hall. Without a ticket, I couldn't go inside.

I looked for Hoshino. Hoshino was waving from inside the hall. I waved back. Hoshino held up the ticket, showing it to me. I wanted to beckon him, but I couldn't bring myself to call Hoshino over. Instead, I held up the colas, acknowledging his signal.

Hoshino, while making sure I could see the ticket, crumpled it up with both hands. Then, in slow-motion throwing form, he threw it in a random direction.

I dropped the colas from my hands. The splashes scattered onto the feet of a nearby couple.

"What do you think you're doing!"

The woman shrieked.

"Oh, I'm sorry."

In that moment of distraction, Hoshino disappeared. I was filled with rage.

"Hey!"

The man from the couple shoved me.

"Ugh! Now my shoes are all sticky!"

The woman said.

I quickly left the scene.

The word "kill" was running through my head.

Ironman 29 was in the winding line. He had stickers with the number 29 on both knees.

He is looking at me. I realize I'm holding the green apple.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11th (Tue) 20:04

□ Scalper and the Woman with Long Hair

Seven o'clock at night.

The scheduled start time for the concert.

The crowd that was there just a moment ago had completely disappeared into the hall, leaving only a few scattered figures around. A scalper was trying to sell a ticket at an exorbitant price to a girl who couldn't get one.

The girl was crying, saying she didn't have that much money.

"Oh, well. Whatever you have is fine."

The scalper said, giving the ticket to the girl. I aimlessly wandered back and forth in front of the scalper.

"What do you want? I don't have any more."

The scalper said and walked away.

I sat down under a ginkgo tree and looked up at the hall.

Has it already started?

A woman with long hair was also gazing blankly up at the hall. She probably also failed to get a ticket. But I had one. If Hoshino hadn't done that, I would be inside the hall right now. The woman eventually started humming a song. It was Lily's "Wound That Heals." The singing voice was so pleasant that I unconsciously started humming along.

Wounds That Heal

The evening glow carries melancholy.
 The clear air becomes heavy.
 If days repeat, they might as well end in one day.
 If life is the other side of death,
 I want to die as if I'm living.

A story that begins with love,
 If I throw it away, let's return to a blank page. A world of
 nothing.
 What I truly love isn't you,
 It's your bitter sighs. That's all I want, that's what I
 believe in.

A blank face stands before the mirror,
 It's pointless to force a smile.
 Let's wash my face with water and go out, right now.
 I want to end everything. There's no point in being here
 anymore.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:07

☐ Perform the ritual

When I came to my senses, the woman was gone. All that
 was around me was my "Wound That Heals"

A dull pain echoed. I slumped down on the stairs, took a
 knife out of my bag, and pressed it against my wrist. My plan
 had totally failed. But thinking that's just how life is, I didn't
 feel the need to change it, and I cut my wrist. Blood started
 to flow. Today is Lily's birthday. That alone was enough for
 me.

The cyclamen I raised with my blood has buds
 If the flowers bloom red
 My wounds will also heal

The blood flowing from my wrist will no longer bloom
 cyclamen flowers.
 These wounds will never heal.

A story that begins with love
 What I truly like is not you
 If you discard it, let's return to a blank page, a world of
 nothing
 It's your sad sighs, that's the only thing I want and can
 believe in

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:17

☐ The one who interrupts the ritual

"Um..."

Someone called out to me. I quickly pulled down my sleeve
 and hid the cut.

"Are you Blue Cat-san?"
A green apple was rolling at my feet.
Instinctively, I picked it up.
He cautiously approached me.

"You're Blue Cat-san, right?"
"....."
"I'm Winter."

He said with a wry smile. Winter, the idol of "LilyPhilia." He was a fat middle-aged man.
"I didn't mean to deceive you. Well, that's how it is, so sorry. Please don't send me any more emails."
With that, Winter walked away.

Looking back, I should have laughed out loud. Hoshino had been completely deceived by Winter. Hoshino, releasing dopamine from his brain while gazing at the moon with a fat middle-aged man.
Serves him right.
However, at that time, I didn't know that Blue Cat had been sending emails to Winter all along. So, I didn't understand the meaning of Winter's, that is, the fat middle-aged man's, words. I vaguely felt only anger and emptiness.

That my site had been constantly defiled by a middle-aged man. And more than anything, that he had interrupted my precious ritual. A ritual that has been defiled once cannot be repeated. A ritual is that solemn.

I even thought about stabbing him out of spite.
But when I looked around, he was nowhere to be found.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:19

□ Moment of Suffocation

Eventually, the live show ended, and the audience began to leave the venue. In an instant, the area was filled with people. I was suddenly punched in the side, and my breath stopped. When I turned around, it was Hoshino.

"What the hell, you're still here?"

Hoshino snatched the apple from my hand.

"Did anyone talk to you?"

I shook my head. He was waiting for Winter. Looking back, I now understand why he gave me the apple, took the ticket, and left me outside.

"Hmph. See ya."

Hoshino walked away from me, looking around. He casually held up the green apple so everyone could see it. He transformed from Hoshino into Blue Cat right before my eyes.

At that moment, I see it.

A strong-smelling ether gushing out from Hoshino's back. It wasn't Lily's ether. It was the smell of that ether we used in science experiments.

I can't breathe anymore.
Ether! Ether! Ether!

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:20

☐ In the Wave of the Crowd

The surroundings are chaotic. The crowd is surging like a wave. My gaze is fixed on Hoshino's back. I push through the crowd to get closer to Hoshino. However, the flow of the crowd keeps pulling us further apart. I wish this flow would change.

Suddenly, I think of something.

"It's Lily!"

I opened my throat and screamed.

"It's Lily!"

And I pointed in the opposite direction from Hoshino.

"Lily is over there!"

The surroundings buzzed. The crowd started flowing in the direction I pointed.

I was pushed from behind by several people. "Where is she?" voices could be heard everywhere. I even heard someone say, "She was over there!" I planted my feet firmly on the ground. Then, I turned around. Hoshino was nearby. He hadn't noticed me. I angled my body against the flow of the crowd and let the people rushing towards the non-existent Lily pass by. Finally, Hoshino passed by my side. I stabbed him in the back with a knife.

"Ugh..."

Hoshino let out a sound as if he'd been pricked by a thumbtack. But without even trying to check the pain, he leaned forward, still searching for Lily.

His knees buckled, and he collapsed.

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:40

☐ Wound That Heals

An apple was rolling at my feet.

I quickly picked it up and shoved it into my pocket.

I tried to leave the scene quickly, pushing through the crowd. But the more I tried to push through, the more I was pushed back.

"Someone's fallen!"

A voice came from behind.

"Don't push!"

Someone else shouted. A woman's scream could be heard. The screams spread like wildfire, echoing around. But the flow of people didn't change. My foot stepped on something soft. When I looked down, Hoshino was there. He was spitting blood from his mouth. His eyes were vacant. My body was pushed further and further by the wave of people.

I turned on my heel and let myself be carried by the flow. Eventually, I was pushed out of the crowd and stood alone, gazing blankly at the Quatre building. Lily was surely somewhere in this building.

I feel the ether quietly filling the air. Finally, the real world has returned.
Lily must be happy too.
Suddenly remembering, I rolled up my sleeve and looked at my left arm.
The wound on my arm was completely dry. I licked the wound, humming
Lily's song, and headed towards Shibuya Station.
The song was, of course, "Wound That Heals."

《Posted by: Satie》July 11 (Tue) 20:44

☐ Goodbye

Humans cannot fly.

(The End)

$\zeta^\dagger$



リリイ・シュシュのすべて

いわ いしゆん じ
岩井 俊二

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